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March-April 2007

Gazette

USA

Masih-e-Mau'ood Number

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
Masih-e-Mau'ood alaihissalam

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FEEDBACK ABOUT JAMIA TRIP 2006

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to go to Canada and visit Jamia Ahmadiyya this year. It was so much fun doing all of the various activities and it was a life-changing experience. I have been to Canada multiple times in the previous years, but they weren't as exciting. All the different attractions and masques were more than I expected. It might sound cliché, but it is difficult to say it in any other words. I would like to thank everyone involved in arranging the program for their hard work and dedication. This trip is and will be a highlight of my life and I will remember it forever.

Aqeel Akbar – Waqfe Nau

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Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

saw:	sallallahu alaihi wasallam (Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him)
as:	alaihissalam (Peace be upon him)
ra:	radhi allah hu 'anhu (May Allah be pleased with him/her)
rh:	rahimahullahu ta'ala (May Allah shower mercy on him/her)
aba:	ayyada hullah ta'ala binasrihil aziz (May Allah strengthen him with His mighty help)
swt:	subhana wa ta'ala (Holy and Exalted)

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Table of Contents

2	MESSAGE For our Readers: Ahsanullah Zafar
3	Al-Qur'an
4	Al-Hadith
5	Sayings of the Promised Messiah[as]
6	Traditions of the Holy Prophet[saw] Regarding Jesus[as] and Coming of the Promised Messiah[as]
10	The Status of the Promised Messiah[as]
16	A Brief Summary of the Friday Sermon of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] Delivered on December 22, 2006
18	A Brief Summary of the Friday Sermon of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] Delivered on December 29, 2006
20	Conditions of *Bai'at* and the Responsibilities of an Ahmadi: Daud A. Hanif, Missionary In Charge and Na'ib Ameer
21	Waqf-e-Jadid: A Brief Summary of the Friday Sermon of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] Delivered on January 12, 2007
25	Chastity—Essential for the Preservation of the Institution of Marriage: Nasir M. Malik, National Tarbiyyat Secretary
33	Choosing a Spouse: According to the Islamic Teachings: Haidar Ali Zafar, Missionary In Charge, Germany
45	ALC 2007 Report: Munawwar Saqib, Qa'id Umumi
49	Maqbratus Salam, Baltimore, MD: Munir Ahmad Khan
50	Poem: Whose Will, My Will, I Will, The Will: Ahmed Iqbal Khan, Baltimore, MD
52	Means of Self-purification: Yusef Latif
55	Islamic Dress Code and the West: Maham Saleem
57	Rabwah: A Place for Martyrs: Khalid Hasan
59	Nikah Forms and Related Matters
61	Resolution at the Sad Demise of Br. Muhaimin Karim: National Majlise Aamla Ahmadiyya USA
62	A Thank You Note to the Jama'at from the Karim Family: Abdul and Rafia Karim

MESSAGE

For our Readers

Hazrat Khalifatul Masieh has drawn our attention towards celebrating the Khilafat Centenary in a befitting manner, detailed plans being laid out under the Markazi Committee on this matter. This is the year of preparations for the Centenary, so that we can celebrate the occasion during the year 2008. He has also drawn our attention to how we all need to work towards all goals, such that Allah will Bless us with the attribute of Al-Raheem and Grant us our efforts.
It is in this spirit that I invite each individual Ahmadi to participate in these preparations, so that we can then be effective as a Jamat.

One key element of next year's events is a public celebration of Khilafat-e Ahmadiyya. As Ahmadies we all understand the benefits of Khilafat and we all observe the calls of Hazrat Khalifatul Masieh Al-Khamis accordingly. There is the matter of bringing out such aspects that would be appropriate for presentation and discussion to our American compatriots, the Media as appropriate. This requires us to dig into meanings derived from original sources and its relevance to what is at hand in the society around us. This would include references from the Quran, Hadith, Khilafate Rashida, Masieh Mo'oud AS, Khulafa-e Ahmadiyya.
The purpose is to connect with the issues of the day in America, and how Khilafat and Ahmadiyyat is meaningful and can benefit all in America. It is to promote a vision of Khilafat as would be relevant to the issues at hand. It is to give comfort and hope for the future to our fellow Americans.

It is imperative that individual Ahmadies in America provide feedback as to how they see the contemporary issues coming together with the teachings that we follow. Remember, we are not looking for just slogans. There is a need to pick up precepts and connect them with existing life (issues such as freedom, civil rights, Constitution of the US, **The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen,** etc).

Please write to me individually. Make it brief and I will ask for you to expand the matter if it seems to be appropriate. Quote the original sources that will connect to the subject / problem in our society with the solution or showing how it connects with the principles and articles of our Constitution, etc.

This work is important. Without developing these ideas now, we will be unable to engage non-Muslim elements in a meaningful manner. The entire Celebration hinges on the materials we can bring out and put together with issues of the day, more so than the actual pronouncements and announcements themselves.

Just as there has been a solid response to the appeal for funds for next years efforts, I am hoping for an equally robust response on developing these ideas. Insha'Allah.

Ahsanullah Zafar
Baitur Rahman Mosque
February 18, 2007

Al-Qur'an

اِذْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ يٰعِيْسٰٓى اِنِّىْ مُتَوَفِّيْكَ وَرَافِعُكَ اِلَىَّ مُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ اِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَاَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيْمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيْهِ تَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ۝

When Allah said, O Jesus, I will cause thee to die *a natural death* and will exalt thee to Myself, and will clear thee from *the charges of* those who disbelieve, and will place those who follow thee above those who disbelieve, until the Day of Resurrection; then to Me shall be your return, and I will judge between you concerning that wherein you differ. (3:56)

اِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقٰتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِىَ ۚ وَاِنْ تُخْفُوْهَا وَتُؤْتُوْهَا الْفُقَرَآءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۭ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ۝

If you give alms openly, it is well *and good*, but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you; and He will remove from you *many of* your sins. And Allah is aware of what you do. (2:272)

Al-Hadith

عَنْ اَبِيْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ اَنَّ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: مَنْ اَنْفَقَ زَوْجَيْنِ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ نُوْدِيَ مِنْ اَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ ' يَا عَبْدَ اللّٰهِ! هٰذَا خَيْرٌ ' فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ اَهْلِ الصَّلٰوةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّلٰوةِ ' وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْجِهَادِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الْجِهَادِ ' وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ اَهْلِ الصِّيَامِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الرَّيَّانِ ' وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ اَهْلِ الصَّدَقَةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّدَقَةِ قَالَ اَبُوْ بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ بِاَبِيْ اَنْتَ وَاُمِّيْ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ مَا عَلٰى مَنْ دُعِيَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْاَبْوَابِ مِنْ ضَرُوْرَةٍ فَهَلْ يُدْعٰى اَحَدٌ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْاَبْوَابِ كُلِّهَا؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ! وَاَرْجُوْ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ مِنْهُمْ -

بخاري كتاب الصوم باب الريان للصائمين

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "A person will be told to enter Heaven through the door of the virtue in which he distinguishes himself in the way of God. He will hear a voice: 'O Servant of God! This door is better for you. Enter through this door.' If he distinguished himself in offering Prayers, he will be called through the Door of Prayer. If he distinguished himself in Jihad, he will be called through the Door of Jihad. If he distinguished himself in keeping fast, he will be called through the Door of Riyan (Door of Contentment). If he distinguished himself in charity, he will be called through the Door of Charity.' Hearing these words from the Holy Prophet[saw], Hadhrat Abu Bakr[ra] said: 'Messenger[saw] of Allah! May my mother and my father be sacrificed for you. If someone is called through one of these doors and he needs no other door, there will be some fortunate person who will be called through all of these doors.' The Holy Prophet[saw] said: 'Yes, and I am hopeful that you will be one of such fortunate persons.' "

(Bukhari kitabussaum bab alriyyaan lissa'imun)

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH[as]

Resemblance to Jesus son of Mary[as]

I have been informed that I am the *Mujaddid* of the age and that my spiritual excellences bear a resemblance to the spiritual excellences of Jesus son of Mary[as] and that the two closely resemble each other. In accordance with the characteristics of Prophets and Messengers and through the blessings of obedience to the best of mankind and the most exalted of Messengers[saw], I have been exalted above the great many saints who have passed before me. To follow in my footsteps is the way to salvation and happiness and blessings and to go against me is to turn away from God and to be the victim of despair.

[A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 5, p. 657]

On one occasion, I received a revelation which indicated that there was a vigorous discussion in the High Assembly in Heaven, from which I understood that God desired the revival of the faith, but that the High Assembly had not yet been apprised of the identity of the person who would revive the faith, and this was the cause of vigorous debate. It was at this time that in a dream I saw people searching for a Reformer. A man appeared and, gesturing towards me, said:

هٰذا رجلٌ يحب رسول الله

i.e., this is the man who loves the Messenger of Allah.

This meant that the principal qualification for this mission was the love of the Holy Prophet[saw] and that this quality was to be found in me.

[Braheen-e-Ahmadiyyah, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 1, p. 598 sub footnote 3]

Fulfilment of the Need of the Time

In this age of ours, every kind of abuse by the opponents has reached its climax. Vituperation, faultfinding and imposture have arrived at a limit which cannot be exceeded. At the same time, the condition of the Muslims has deteriorated to the extreme. Hundreds of innovations and all types of pagan practices and rejection of faith are observed on all sides. Therefore, most certainly this is the age in which a great Reformer should appear according to the prophecy:

مُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا

...will clear thee from *the charges of* those who disbelieve (3:56)

Then all praise be to Allah that **I am that Reformer**.

[Tiryaq-ul-Qulub, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 15, p. 453, footnote]

Traditions of the Holy Prophet[saw] Regarding Jesus[as] and Coming of the Promised Messiah[as]

(From Hadiqatus Salihin:Translated by Karimullah Zirvi)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that when *Surah Al-Jumu'ah* was revealed to the Holy Prophet[saw], a group of them were sitting in the company of the Holy Prophet[saw]. When the Holy Prophet[saw] recited the verse:

وَّاٰخَرِيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوْا بِهِمْ

wa akharina minhum lamma yalhaqu bihim

And *among* others from among them who have not yet joined them. (62:4)

Someone asked, "Messenger[saw] of Allah! Who are these people who have the status of the Companions of the Holy Prophet[saw] and yet they are not part of them. The Holy Prophet[saw] did not respond to the question. The man asked the same question three times. The narrator says that Hadhrat Salman Farsi[ra] was sitting among them. The Holy Prophet[saw] put his hand on Hadhrat Salman Farsi's[ra] shoulder and said, 'Even if faith had ascended to the Pleiades some among them will restore it back to the earth.' "

(Bukhari kitabattafsir surah Jumu'ah, Muslim)

Hadhrat Abu Qatadah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "The signs of Doomsday will become visible after two hundred years."

(Sunan Ibni Majah kitabal fitn babal ayat)

Hadhrat Hudhaifah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "God Almighty will commission the *Mahdi* after 1240."

(AnnajamuthThaqib, Vol. 2, p 209)

Hadhrat Nafi'[ra] relates that Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar[ra] told him that once, the Holy Prophet[saw] talked about the Antichrist in the presence of people and said: "God is not one-eyed. However, the Antichrist will be one-eyed. The Antichrist's right eye will be sightless and will be raised up like a grape. One night, I saw a dream that I was close to the Ka'bah in Mecca and saw a beautiful wheat-coloured man whose tresses reached his shoulders. His hair was straight and bright and water appeared to be dripping from it. He was making the circuits of the *Baitullah* (House of Allah) while he had his hands on the shoulders of two men. I asked, 'Who is this man?' The people said, 'He is Jesus[as], son of Mary.' Then behind this man I saw another man who had curly hair, rough skin, and was blind in the right eye, making the circuits of the Ka'bah, while putting his hands on the shoulders of a man. Physically he resembled Ibn Qatan somewhat. I asked, 'Who is he?' People said, 'He is the Antichrist.' "

(Bukhari kitabal anbiya ba-b wadhkur filkitab Maryam idhantabadhat min ahliha-, Musnad Ahmad, p 39/2)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said, "The Prophets are related to one

another like step-brothers, having the same father but different mothers. Among the people, I am most closely related to Jesus[as], son of Mary. This is so, because there has been no Prophet between him and I. When you see him, recognise him from his appearance. He will be of average height, with straight reddish-blond hair from which water will appear to be dripping, even without moistening the hair. After being commissioned, he will break the cross, kill the swine, and will end the poll-tax. During his age, God will make all other religions extinct with respect to their spirituality and worldly power and might, and will kill the false Antichrist. This will be such a peaceful time that animals will graze together: a camel with a lion, a leopard with cows, and a wolf with goats. Young and older children will play with snakes. Thus, with the command of Allah as long as He wishes the Messiah to live in the world, he will live and then he will die. Muslims will offer his funeral Prayer and take part in his burial."

(Abu Da'ud kitabal mala-ham bab khurujaddajjal, p 594, Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, p 437/2)

Hadhrat Ibn 'Umar[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "I saw 'Isa, Musa, and Ibrahim (in a vision). 'Isa had a broad chest and reddish curly hair. However, Musa was a bit heavy-set, with wheat-colored hair that was straight like the people of the *Zut* tribe."

(Bukhari kitabal anbiya' bab wadhkur fil kitab Maryam idhantabadhat min ahliha)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said, "O Muslims! What will be your condition when the Son of Mary descends among you and will be your *Imam* from among yourselves?"

Another narration is: "Being one of you, he will lead you in Prayers."

(Bukhari kita-bal anbiya' bab nazul 'Isa bin Maryam, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, p 336/2)

"It is just possible that the one who lives amongst you long enough might meet Jesus[as], the son of Mary, who is the *Imam Mahdi* and a just arbiter. He will break the cross and kill the swine."

(Musnad Ahmad, p 156/2)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said. "Doomsday will not come until Jesus[as], son of Mary, an arbiter and leader, is commissioned. He will break the cross, kill the swine, end the poll-tax, and will distribute so much wealth that people will refuse to take it."

(Sunan Ibni Majah kitabal fitn bab fitanataddajjal wa kuruj 'Isa- bin Maryam wa khuruj yajuj wa majuj,)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "By Allah in whose possession is my life! Soon, the Son of Mary will descend among you who will make right decisions, arbitrate fairly, break the cross, kill the swine, and end the fighting. Similarly, he will distribute a lot of wealth, which no one will accept. During this period of time a single prostration will be better than the whole world and everything in it. While narrating this tradition Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] said: 'If you wish, you can understand it by reciting the following verse:

immin ahlil kitabi illa-tayuminanna bih qabla mautihiwa yaumal qiya-mati yakunu 'alaihim sha-hida

And there is no *one* among the people of the Book but will certainly believe in him before his death; and on the Day of Resurrection, he (Jesus[as]) shall be a witness against

them. (4:160)' "

(Bukhari kitabal anbiya' bab nuzul 'Isa bin Maryam)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "Jesus[as] will descend and he will kill the swine and break the cross. Prayers will be joined for his sake. He will distribute wealth but no one will accept it, and he will end the poll-tax. He will descend at a place called *Arrauha'* and he will don a pilgrimage robe there for Hajj and 'Umrah."

(Musnad Ahmad, p 290/2 Misri)

Beware! No Messenger or Prophet will come during the period between Jesus[as] son of Mary (The Promised Messiah[as]) and I. Hearken! He will be my vicegerent after me in my followers. He will certainly kill the Antichrist, break the cross into pieces, and end the poll-tax. At that time wars will end. Remember! Whosoever gets the honour of meeting him, should convey my *Salam* to him.

(Tibranil ausat wassighir)

Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said, "When the Messiah descends, he will marry, have children, will live about forty-five years, and then will pass away and will be buried with me in my grave. Thus, I and the Messiah will get up from a grave between Abu- Bakr[ra] and 'Umar[ra]."

(Mishkat bab nuzul 'Isa, p 480)

Note:

Jesus[as] will appear amongst us without a Religious Law. However, there is no doubt that he will be a Prophet.

(Fatuhate Makkiyya, p 57/1, Muslim, p 87/101 and Musnad Ahmad, p 3453

Hadhrat Anas[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "The time is near when the situation will become serious, there will be numerous calamities in the world, people will become miserly, and wretched people will see Doomsday near. At this critical time, the one commissioned by Allah will appear. There is no Mahdi other than Jesus son of Mary[as]."

(Ibni Majah bab shiddatuzzaman, p 257 Misri Matba' 'Ilmiyyah 1313 H, Kanzul 'ammal, p 186/7)

Hadhrat Abu Sa'id Khudri[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "The Mahdi will have a close relationship with me. He will have a bright forehead and tall nose. He will establish justice in the world as the world will be full of oppression . He will remain the master for seven years."

(Sunan Abu Daud kitabal mahdi)

Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin Harith[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said, "Some people will appear in the East who will clear the way for the Mahdi."

(Ibni Majah bab khurujal mahdi)

Hadhrat Muhammad bin 'Ali[ra] (i.e. Hadhrat Imam B-qir[ra]) relates: "For our *Mahdi* there are appointed two signs which have never been manifested since the creation of the Heavens and the earth. The first is that the moon will be eclipsed on the first of its appointed nights in the month of *Ramadan*, and the sun will be eclipsed on the middle one of its appointed days. Both these signs, in this way, shall have never appeared before for any claimant "

(Sunan Dar Qutni bab sifat-ussalatal khusuf walkusuf wa hai'atahuma, p 188/1, Matba' Ansari, Delhi, 1310 H)

(Sahib Jawaharul Israr writes that this narration is mentioned in Arba'in that the Holy Prophet[saw] said), "The

Mahdi will be raised in a town called *Kad'a*. God Almighty will support his claim with manifest signs. He will be endowed with three hundred and thirteen illustrious companions whose names and addresses will be written in an authentic book."

(Kadha fil arba'in, Jawa-hrul israr qalmi p 56, musannafah Hadrat Sheikh 'Ali Hamzah bin 'Ali al-Mulkul Tusi Irshadati Faridi, Vol. 3, p 70 Matbu'a Mufid 'Am Press, Agrah, 1330 H)

Hadhrat 'Ali[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "A person will be commissioned in the region of *Wara'innahar* (Turkistan) who will be named Al-Harith bin Harrath. The name of his advance-guard will be Mansoor. He will be a source of grandeur for the family of Muhammad[sa] just as the *Quraish* was a source of grandeur for the Holy Prophet[saw]. It is obligatory upon each Muslim to help another Muslim or to answer another Muslim's call for help."

(Abu Da'ud kitabal Mahdi)

Hadhrat 'Ali[ra] relates that a man asked the Holy Prophet[saw], "Besides keeping fast during the month of Ramadhan, during which other month should I keep fast?" The Holy Prophet[saw] said: "If you want to keep fast besides the month of Ramadhan, then keep fast in the month of *Muharram* as this is also a month blessed by Allah. During this month, there is a day on which God had delivered a nation (i.e., Bani Israel) from a tyrant ruler and in the future also in the same month Allah will deliver another nation from a similar tyrant ruler."

(Tirmidhi abwabassaum bab saumal Muharram)

Hadhrat Thauban[ra] who was a freed slave of the Holy Prophet[saw] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] once said: "Two groups of my followers are such that God Almighty will save them from the Fire. One is the group that will fight in a country called Hind and the other group will be the helper of Jesus[as], son of Mary."

(Nasai kitabal jihad, Musnad Ahmad, p 278/5, Kanzul 'ammal, p 202/7)

It is related that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "My *Ummah* (followers) is a very blessed *Ummah*. It is difficult to decide whether their days in the beginning are better or their last days."

(Jami'a Saghir, p 54/1 Misri, Kanzal 'ammal, p 202/7)

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PRAYER (Supplication)

Prayer (Supplication) is a great thing. Alas! The people do not know what it really is. Some of them think that whatever is asked for, must be given (i.e., the prayer must be accepted as it is offered). That is why whenever they ask for something and it is not given to them by God they feel despair and begin to think evil of God. Whereas what behooves a believer is that even though he may not be given what he asks for through his prayer, he should not despair, for he has not been given because the Mercy of God has not found it useful for him.

Behold! If a child wishes to hold a burning charcoal, the mother would run and hold his hand back and she may slap him for this act. Pondering over the philosophy of the prayer and realizing that the All-Knowing God knows what is good and bad for the people truly affords me very great pleasure.

(Malfoozat Vol. II, p 195, London Edition, 1984)

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THE STATUS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH[as]

امروز قوم من نشناسد مقامِ من

روزے بگریہ یاد کند وقتِ خوشترم

"Today my people do not recognize my status; The day will come when they will recall my blessed time with tears."

[Izala-e-Auham, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 3, p. 184]

All Bounties Earned through the Holy Prophet[saw] and the Holy Qur'an

Through the blessing of obedience and love for the Holy Prophet[saw], and by virtue of following God's Holy Word, the Gracious One has bestowed the singular favor of His converse upon this humble one. He has graced me with spiritual knowledge, and has revealed many hidden secrets to me. He has filled the bosom of this humble one with countless verities and points of wisdom. He has informed me repeatedly that all these gifts and favors, and all this grace and beneficence, and all this kindness and attention, and all these bounties and support, and all this converse and discourse are entirely due to my obedience and love for the Seal of Prophets[saw].

جمالِ ہم نشیں در من اثر کرد

وگرنہ من ہماں خاکم کہ ہستم

"The beauty of my Companion has made its imprint upon me; otherwise, I am the same dust that I have always been."

[Braheen-e-Ahmadiyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol.1, pp. 645-646, footnote 11]

Divine Source of the Revelations

I believe in all the revelations which are being bestowed upon me from God Almighty as I believe in the Torah, the Gospels, and the Holy Qur'an. I have knowledge and cognizance of God...Therefore, I fully partake of His pure revelation as far as a human being can partake of it when inperfect nearness to Him. When a man is put into the blazing fire of Divine love—as all Prophets have been—then the revelations which he receives are not accompanied by confused dreams. Rather, just as dry fodder is burned in an oven, so are all his apprehensions and self-induced thoughts put to fire, and there remains only the pure revelation from God. And such revelation is bestowed only upon those who, in this very world, take the color of the Prophets with complete purification, love and devotion, as on page 504, line 18 of *Braheen-e-Ahmadiyyah*, the following revelation is mentioned with regard to myself:

جری اللّٰہ فی حلل الانبیاء

That is, 'An appointed one of God, in the mantle of Prophets.' Therefore, I have not been sent with doubtful and conjectural revelation. Rather, I have been sent with definite and certain revelation....I declare in the name of God, Who controls my life, that I have been informed with categorical arguments—and I am informed continuously—that whatever is conveyed to me and is vouchsafed upon me as revelation is from God and not from Satan. I believe in it as I believe in the existence of the sun and the moon, or as I believe that two and two make four. It is

true, however, that when I give my opinion with regard to the religious law or when I interpret a revelation on my own, it is possible that I might make a mistake, but in such a case I am not permitted to persist in error and Divine mercy soon points out for me the way to its true interpretation. Indeed, my soul is nurtured in the lap of angels.

[Majmu'ah Ishtiharat, vol. 3, pp. 154-155]

And my Lord has drawn me towards Himself and has appointed a good place for me and has perfected His favors unto me and, having rescued me from involvement with worldly affairs and undesirable indulgences, has conducted me to His Holy Place and has bestowed upon me that which He has bestowed and has made me among the recipients of revelation and the *Muhaddathin*. I did not possess any worldly provision nor did I own horses or command cavalry, but I have been bestowed steeds of the pen and have been provided with the jewelry of letters and have been favored with the light which saves me from stumbling and guides me aright. This divine and heavenly wealth has enriched me, has removed my poverty, has illumined me, and has lit up my night and has admitted me to the rank of those who have been favored with bounties.

[Nur-ul-Haq, Roohani Khaza'in, Part 1, vol. 8, pp. 38-39]

میں وہ پانی ہوں کہ آیا آسمان سے وقت پر

میں وہ ہوں نورِ خدا جس سے ہوا دن آشکار

'I am the water that has descended from heaven at its due time; I am the Divine light, which has illumined the day"

[Brahin-e-Ahmadiyyah, Part V, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 21, p. 145]

I cannot say what I have done that has made me the recipient of this divine favor, but I feel my heart involuntarily drawn towards God Almighty with such deep loyalty that it cannot be restrained by any other consideration. So all this is pure Divine bounty. I have never submitted myself to rigorous physical discipline, nor have I subjected myself to hard exercises like some contemporary *Sufis*, nor did I undertake a retreat in complete mystic solitude. Nor, indeed, have I done anything by of asceticism which is contrary to the practice of the Holy Prophet[saw], or which may be objectionable according to the Word of God Almighty. Indeed, I have always felt abhorred by the *fakirs* and those who introduce all sorts of innovations in faith. However, during the lifetime of my father, when his death was approaching, it so happened that I saw in a dream a holy man who was elderly and had a pure countenance, and he pointed out to me that it is the tradition of the family of the Holy Prophet[saw] to observe some days of fasting in order to attract the heavenly lights; thus pointing out that I too should observe this tradition. Hence, I thought it appropriate to observe fasts for some time. But, at the same time, I felt that it would be better not to disclose this to anyone. So I would have my meals delivered to me in the men's quarters of the house and gave them away to some orphans with whom I had arranged that they should come at specified times. Thus I would spend all day fasting. No one, except God, knew about these fasts. After a few weeks, I surmised that it was no difficult matter for me to fast when I was still having one full meal everyday. I, therefore, decided to start cutting down on my food intake. I started reducing my food gradually, until I would subsist on one *chapatti* in the entire day and night. I continued reducing my food

in the same manner until I reduced my food intake to a few ounces in 24 hours. This I continued for approximately eight or nine months. Although I was taking so little food as could not suffice even for an infant two or three months old, God Almighty protected me from all ill-effect and illness.

Wonders Experienced through Fasting

Among the wonders of this kind of fasting that I experienced are the fine visions which were bestowed upon me during that time. I met some past Prophets and some of the exalted Muslim *Auliya'*. Once—in a state of complete wakefulness—I met the Holy Prophet[saw] along with Hassan[ra], Hussain[ra], 'Ali[ra] and Fatimah[ra]. This was not a dream, but something that I experienced in a state of wakefulness. I met many holy people in this manner, but it would take long to describe all those meetings. Moreover, I was granted views of spiritual lights that were represented in columns of red and green, the beauty of which cannot possibly be described in words. These columns of light, some of them shining white and others green and red, rose straight towards heaven and their sight filled my heart with delight. Nothing can be compared to the joy that my heart and soul experienced in beholding these columns. I believe that these columns were a representation of the love between God and man. It was a light that proceeded from the heart upwards and there was another light that descended from above and the two together took on the shape of a column. These are spiritual matters which are beyond the ken of the world. The world cannot recognize them as they are far removed from its eyes, but there are some in the world who are made aware of them. In short, due to this prolonged fasting, wonders were revealed to me in the form of visions of various kinds and forms.

Physical Discipline and Hardship

In addition, one benefit that I derived from this prolonged practice of fasting was that after having subjected myself to this discipline, I found myself capable of enduring hunger and thirst over long periods, if the need should ever arise. I have often thought that if a corpulent person, who is also a wrestler, had to starve along with me, he would die before I could feel any acute need for food. This experience taught me that one can progress stage by stage in starving oneself and that until one's body becomes accustomed to such privations a comfort-loving person is not fit to accomplish stages of spiritual progress. But I would not advise everyone to embark upon such a discipline, nor did I do so of my own accord. I have known many ignorant *dervishes* who adopted a course of hard physical discipline and in the end lost their sanity and spent the rest of their lives in madness or became afflicted with various diseases such as tuberculosis, etc. Not all humans possess similar mental faculties. Those whose faculties are naturally weak cannot bear any physical discipline. Very soon, they are afflicted with some dangerous disease. It is better that one should not subject oneself to a rigorous physical discipline on one's own. Rather one should adopt the faith of simple people. Of course, if one receives a revelation from God and it is not opposed to the magnificent *Shariah* of Islam, it must be carried out. However, the foolish *fakirs* of today teach disciplines which do not result in any good. One should stay away from them. Keep

in mind that it was on the basis of a clear vision from God Almighty that I carried out rigorous physical discipline for eight or nine months and tasted hunger and thirst. Then I stopped its continuous practice, but did revert to it occasionally.

Spiritual Discipline

All of this happened, but there still remained the spiritual discipline. I have also come to partake of this in these days when I have to endure the *Maulavis* with their foul tongue, loose talk, declaration of apostasy, and insults and other ignorant ones with their curses and foul language. In my opinion, during the thirteen hundred years since the time of the Holy Prophet[saw], no one else could have partaken of such treatment. Being declared an apostate, I was considered worse than the infidels, Christians and atheists. The fools of the nation, through announcements and newspapers, gave me such bad names as are not to be found in the case of anyone else. I am, therefore, grateful to Allah that I was tested with both kinds of hardship.

[Kitab-ul-Bariyyah, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 13, pp. 195-201, footnote]

God Almighty knows—and He is the best witness over everything—that the first thing that has been granted to me in His way is a **pure heart**—that is, a heart that had no real attachment with anyone except God, the Lord of honor and glory. There was a time when I was young and now I am old, but at no time in my life have I had any real attachment to anything except God, the Mighty, and the Glorious... Because of this love of mine, I have never been reconciled to any religion, the doctrines of which were in conflict with the Greatness and Unity of God, or involved any dishonor to Him. That is why I did not approve of the Christian faith, for at every step it dishonors God, the Mighty, and the Glorious... In the same way the Hindu faith, one branch of which is the Arya sect, falls far short of the truth. According to them, every particle in this world is self-existing and has no Creator. Thus, the Hindus do not believe in God, without Whom nothing comes into existence and without Whose support nothing can continue to exist... I have reflected deeply and I have found both these religions opposed to the truth. It is not possible for me to recount here all the inhibitions and despair that are encountered in these faiths in one's search for God Almighty. It is enough to state in brief that these two religions afford no guidance to God Who is sought by pure souls and by finding Whom man achieves salvation in this very life and the gates of divine light are opened for him and perfect love can be generated through His perfect recognition. On the contrary, these religions push their followers into the pits of ruin. There are other similar religions in the world, but they all fail to lead a votary to the One God, Who has no associate. They leave the seeker in darkness. These are all the religions in the study of which I spent a great portion of my life. I reflected over their principles with honesty and diligence, but I found them all divorced and estranged from truth. The blessed religion, the name of which is Islam, is the only faith that leads to God Almighty and is the only faith, which fulfills all the pure demands of human nature... The God of Islam does not shut the door of His grace upon anyone. He calls everyone to come to Him and the door is opened for those who eagerly run towards Him.

Bounties and Titles

I have, by the sheer

grace of God, and not on account of any merit of my own, been accorded a full measure of the bounty, which was bestowed before me on the Prophets and Messengers[as] and the Chosen ones of God. It would not have been possible for me to be granted this bounty had I not followed the ways of my lord and master, the Pride of the Prophets, the Best of Mankind, Muhammad[saw]. Whatever I have been given, I have been given due to this adherence and I know through my true and perfect knowledge that no man can reach God except through following the Holy Prophet[saw] nor can anyone arrive at a full understanding of God except through him.

[Haqiqat-ul-Wahi, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 22, pp. 59-65]

Some ignorant people wrongly imagine that I claim to be a recipient of revelation by way of imposture. In truth, this is the act of the Powerful God, Who created the heavens and earth and the universe. Whenever faith in God declines, someone like me is raised; God speaks to him and manifests His wonders through him until people understand that God exists. I announce openly that if a person, whether Asian or European, comes to stay in my company, he will soon discover the truth of my statements.

[Kitab-ul-Bariyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 13, p.18]

Reformer of the Fourteenth Century

When the thirteenth century drew to a close and the beginning of the fourteenth century approached, I was informed by God Almighty, through revelation that I am the Reformer of the fourteenth century. I received the revelation:

اَلرَّحْمٰنُ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْاٰنَ - لِتُنْذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا اُنْذِرَ اٰبَآءُهُمْ وَ لِتَسْتَبِيْنَ سَبِيْلَ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ - قُلْ اِنِّيْ اُمِرْتُ وَاَنَا اَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ -

That is, God has taught you the Qur'an and has expounded its true meanings to you so that you should warn these people—who through generations of neglect and not having been warned have fallen into error—of their evil end, so that the way of those offenders may be made manifest who do not desire to follow the right path after it has been openly declared. Tell them: I have been commissioned by God and am the foremost of believers.

[Kitab-ul-Bariyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 13, pp. 201-202, footnote]

According to His unchanging law that whenever darkness prevails, God Almighty attends to the support of the Muslims and appoints some special servant of His, who is chosen for the purpose of the revival of Islam and for the good of the people, this humble one has been raised at the turn of the century having been awarded the title of *Mujaddid* [Reformer of the age] by God Almighty. I have been granted such knowledge and resources for stamping out the evils that were spreading in the world as cannot become available to anyone unless these are bestowed by the special favor of God.

[Karamat-us-Sadiqin, Roohani Khaza'in vol. 7, p. 45]

When God Almighty, observing the condition of the world and finding the earth filled with every type of disobedience, sin and misguidance, appointed me for the propagation of the truth and the reform of people and the time was.....the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century, then I—in obedience to this command—sent forth the call through written announcements and speeches, that I am that person, who was to come from God at the turn of the century for revival of the faith.

The purpose was that I should re-establish the faith which had disappeared from the earth, and pull mankind towards reform and righteousness and truthfulness through the power and strength that God had bestowed upon me and through the magnetic power of His Hand. I was also destined to correct their doctrinal errors and to reform their conduct.

Messiah and Mahdi

A few years thereafter, it was made quite clear to me through Divine revelation that the Messiah, whose advent among the Muslims had been promised from the beginning, and the last Mahdi whose advent had been Divinely decreed to take place at the time of the decline of Islam and the spread of error, and who was to be guided directly by God, and who was to invite people to partake of the heavenly banquet, and whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet[saw] thirteen hundred years in advance, was none other than myself. Divine revelation was vouchsafed to me so clearly and so continuously that it left no room for doubt. Every word of such revelations found its firm place in my heart like an iron nail. These revelations were replete with grand prophecies which were most clearly fulfilled. Their regularity, number and miraculous power compelled me to affirm that they were the words of the One God Who is without associate and Who revealed the Holy Qur'an. I do not mention the Torah and the Gospels in this context because the Torah and the Gospels have been so corrupted at the hands of their followers that they can no longer be described as the Word of God. In short, the revelation of God that descended upon me is so certain and absolute that through it I found my God. That revelation not only carried with it full certainty through heavenly signs contained therein but every portion of it—when put before the Word of God Almighty contained in the Holy Qur'an — proved to be in full accord with it. Heavenly signs came down like rain to confirm its truth..

[Tadhkirat-us-Shahadatain, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 20, pp. 3-4]

(Essence of Islam, Vol. IV, pp 20-33' First Edition:2006)

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HADITH

Hadhrat Jabir[ra] bin 'Abdullah relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said:

"I have been bestowed five things which have never been given to any Prophet before me. I have been helped with the awe of one month's travel. The whole earth has been purified for me and has been declared a mosque. Wherever any one of my followers notices that it is Prayer time, he can offer Prayer at that place. I have been bestowed the honour of intercession, which has not been given to previous Prophets. I have been sent as a Messenger to all the people, whereas before me, Messengers were sent to particular nations."

(Nasai kitabttaharat bab tayammum bissaid)

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A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE FRIDAY SERMON OF HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V[aba]

DELIVERED ON DECEMBER 22, 2006

On 22nd December 2006, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] delivered the Friday Sermon at *Baitus Subuh*, Frankfurt, Germany

Hazoor[aba] said: In Western Countries these days there is a marked increase in the criticism of religion and God. The fact is that these people are themselves *guilty* of idolatry, falsehood and deceit. Every kind of evil is to be found in them and even *if* they do not deceive their own people they do deceive other nations at a higher level. Despite all these evils, they dare to attack religious doctrines in the name of freedom of expression and they do So merely to alienate people from religion But when it comes to their personal beliefs, they are very touchy. They don't mind whether someone wears clothes or not, but are quick to condemn a woman who uses a scarf or covers her head because of her faith.

Hazoor[aba] said: These people are trying to spread the misconception that all divisions are being caused by religion, while in fact these divisions result from abandoning the teachings of God and falling into sin and immorality. God does bring people to account for these sins, hut He *is* also the Master and may forgive if He wants to. These nations make *laws* and punish anyone who violates them, but when God punishes people for transgressing against the teachings *which* He has conveyed through His Messengers—they present this concept in a distorted manlier

Hazoor[aba] said: In spite of the fact that these people are benefiting day and night from the countless bounties which God has granted them through His grace and mercy, they have forgotten the purpose of their creation which is the worship of God. The people who portray God as cruel need to be told that He is Most Merciful and if man takes one step toward Him, He comes running to rescue him.

Hazoor[aba] said: The Holy Prophet[saw] was all mercy for mankind. He called people towards Allah with love and kindness and humility and even non-Muslims readily admit this fact. The Holy Qur'an also mentions his kindness and tells us that the Holy Prophet[saw] would give up his night's sleep because of his love for his fellow beings. He would pray for the guidance of mankind and would strive to save them from the snare of Satan. But he would also proclaim that everything he did was for the sake of God, and he did not wait or expect any reward from people. This is the Prophet whom these nations are guilty of blaspheming!

Hazoor[aba] said: It is the duty of every Ahmadi to help the faith. Prepare literature, there is a lot that has to be done in this regard, and to convey it to every German. Prepare answers to questions that arise in today's environment. You may use the internet and email for this purpose, make the best use of these means of communication but do not misuse them. The Promised Messiah[as] said that he would spread his message as far as the post could carry it. There should be no laxity in this work. Do not rest content with the publication of a little literature. Keep at this task with consistency and perseverance.

Hazoor[aba] said: Allah will bless our efforts to convey our message if we exhibit the higher morals, adopt righteous deeds and keep spreading this message with complete obedience and submission. Take this message to every German in every region and every town and city. Your own conduct should not be such that your parents are weary of you, your wife and children are afraid of you, your neighbors are sick of you, the women worry their husbands for the sake of fashion, and the whole atmosphere is poisoned by your temper. Try instead to mold yourselves into the teachings of your faith.

Hazoor[aba] said: Germans are a lively and pragmatic nation, spread your message to them with sympathy and kindness. God has promised the Promised Messiah[as] victory over these nations as well. And this promise shall also be fulfilled in the case of Europe, Asia, Africa, America and the islands. God will bring all willing souls into the fold of. Ahmadiyyat. Divine Grace will push many into the abode of peace. There is no reason to despair. These acts of mischief are only meant to draw our attention to our own weaknesses. We pray that may this nation be able to absorb Allah's blessings. *Ameen.*

(Ch. Hameedullah)
Wakil A'la,
Tahrik Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan

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Resemblance to Jesus Son of Mary[as]

Promised Messiah[as] states:

I have been informed that I am the *Mujaddid* of the age and that my spiritual excellences bear a resemblance to the spiritual excellences of Jesus son of Mary[as] and that the two closely resemble each other. In accordance with the characteristics of Prophets and Messengers and through the blessings of obedience to the Best of Mankind and the most exalted of Messengers[saw], I have been exalted above the great many saints who have passed before me. To follow in my footsteps is the way to salvation and happiness and blessings and to go against me is to turn away from God and to be the victim of despair.

[A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 5, p. 657]

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE FRIDAY SERMON

OF

HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V[aba]

DELIVERED ON DECEMBER 29, 2006

On 29th December 2006, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] delivered the Friday Sermon at Baitus Subuh Mosque, Frankfurt, Germany.

Hazoor[aba] said: Three new mosques will be opened this year in Germany, but this does not mean that the target of building five new mosques every year has been reduced. The foundation stone is also being laid for a mosque in Berlin. This is a very important project and we need to pray that the conditions may remain favorable, and Allah may grant understanding to the nationalists who are opposing the building of this mosque.

Hazoor[aba] said: You should all offer sacrifices for the building of mosques, and try to fulfill the pledges you have made in this regard. Remember, you can only win people's hearts by sacrificing yourselves, your possessions and your time.

Mentioning the sacrifices that had been made by the Lajna of Qadian for building a mosque in Berlin before World War II, Hazoor[aba] said: The Jama'at has always forged ahead in making financial sacrifices, and you too should try to set high standards in this regard.

Hazoor[aba] said: Our task is not merely to build mosques, but also to fill them with worshippers. The people who populate mosques are those who are obedient and virtuous, who are regular in their worship, who submit to Allah with prayers and supplications and who, like pious and godly people, try to attain divine knowledge. Remember, you can't attain true divine understanding unless you have the fear of God in your hearts.

Hazoor[aba] said: In the past people in Europe have opposed the building of our mosques, but when our true message was conveyed to them, they not only stopped opposing us but even helped us in various ways. You should therefore set an example which reveals

the truth of your faith. Keep spreading the message of peace, love and harmony with patience and perseverance.

Hazoor[aba] quoted some Ahadith and some extracts from the writings of the' Promised Messiah and urged the Jama'at to keep progressing both in faith and in practice. Hazoor[aba] said: Each day should bring an increase in your faith, and each day should inspire you with greater fear of Allah.

Hazoor[aba] said: Your duty is not only to build mosques, but to practice the other teachings of Islam as well. For example, you should raise the level of your prayers and fasting, offer *Zakat*, call people towards the truth, and cultivate greater fear of Allah. Try to bring about a pure and pious transformation in yourselves. When you do so, you will witness the manifestation of divine grace.

Hazoor[aba] said: Pray and supplicate so that you may learn the ways of worship. Pray so that you may learn the ways of sacrifices. Pray that you may be able to put your faith into practice, and Allah may accept your services and bless them with His grace.

Hazoor[aba] said: Let us not just spread the message, but let us also show with our own example that we are the people of peace and harmony. No one needs to fear us, for we are the people who dispel the fears of the world. We are the ones who forego our own rights to safeguard the rights of others.

Hazoor[aba] said, the Promised Messiah[as] said that the true beauty of a mosque lies not its building, but in the sincere worshippers who pray in it. Today when we build our mosques let us do so with the understanding that we are going to follow the commands of Allah and are going to fill, these mosques with worshippers. May Allah enable us to do so. *Ameen.*

(Ch. Hameedullah)
Wakil A'la,
Tahrik Jadid Anjuman Ahmadiyya Pakistan,

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The Promised Messiah[as] states:

"There is no God beside the One God, but there is another Messiah, who is now speaking to you. God's jealousy brooks no second, but man's second is there. God has sent me so that I should bestow sight upon the blind who have been sightless, not just for a few years, but for over nineteen hundred years!"

[Majmu'ah Ishtiharat, vol. 2, p 305]

Conditions of *Bai'at* And The Responsibility of An Ahmadi

Daud A Hanif
Missionary In Charge and Na'ib Ameer

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] was given to the worship of Allah Almighty prior to his appointment as the Reformer of the World. He found the followers of different religions engrossed in the worldly pursuits. The condition of the Muslims and their divines - who were to be the models for mankind in spirituality - had become deplorable. The few pious Muslims, who were worried over the plight of Muslims but unable to bring about any spiritual change in the Muslims approached Hadhrat Ahmad[as] and besought him to take their *Bai'at*. He replied them saying that "I am not commissioned by God to do so." Once he replied to Maulvi Abdul Qadir Sahib[ra] that:

"The nature of this humble one is overpowered with the Unity of God and committing all affairs to Allah, and... since Almighty Allah has not conveyed anything to me in the matter of bai'at, it is not proper that I should do so on my own."

However, he remained devoted to Allah and constantly beseeched Him for the redress of the condition of mankind in general and the Muslims in particular. Later on when Allah directed him to take *Bai'at* from people he issued ten conditions for taking *Bai'at* under Divine guidance. These conditions are a compendium of Islamic teachings deduced from the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Hadhrat Muhammad[saw]. Hadhrat Promised Messiah[as] explaining the system of *Bai'at* said:

"This system of Bai'at has been established solely to gather together a group of the righteous people in a Jama'at so that a weighty group of the righteous people should make a holy impact on the world. The unity of these righteous people should be a source of blessings, grandeur, and positive results for Islam. The blessings of being united on one creed may enable them to perform noble and righteous services for the sake of Islam".

Each condition of *Bai'at* targets a specific area. Let us reflect over the second condition. It reads:

"The initiate shall keep away from falsehood, fornication, adultery, trespasses of the eye, debauchery, dissipation, cruelty, dishonesty, mischief and rebellion; and will not permit himself/herself to be carried away by passions, however strong they might be."

In other words the second step toward the spiritual journey is to cleanse/free oneself from these evils. For a detailed explanation of the conditions of *Bai'at* one must refer to Hadhrat Ameerul Mo'mineen Khalifatul Masih V's[aba] *Khutbaat*, wherein he has very eloquently and vividly explained these conditions, which have been published in a book form for the benefit of the members.

These ten conditions are the spiritual *Jihad* initiated by the Imam Al-Mahdi[as]. It is an uphill task in our life-long journey and we need to resort to an original source for guidance. Therefore, always have a copy of the book, "Conditions of *Bai'at* and Responsibility of an Ahmadi" at you home so that members of your household can benefit from it easily.

WAQF-E-JADID

Summary of Friday Sermon delivered by the Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community on *January 12th, 2007*

In the Friday Sermon Hazoor[aba] cited 275[th] verse of *Surah Al-Baqarah* and announced the new Waqf-e- Jadid year.

Huzoo[aba]r gave a brief insight into the historical perspective of the *Waqf-e-Jadid* scheme. The scheme was started in 1957 by Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] only for the Ahmadies of Pakistan for two specific purposes. He made Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] a member of the scheme and specifically instructed him to focus on, firstly the moral training and Tabligh (propagation of Islam) among the rural Jama'ats of Pakistan. Secondly he instructed to concentrate on Tabligh to the Hindu community in the Sind province of Pakistan. In his initial assessment Hadhrat Khalifa tul Masih IV[rh] discovered that religious awareness in the rural areas of Pakistan was in a dire state. The initiative to train and then send *mu'allumeen* (teachers/tutors) to the rural parts of Pakistan to counter this was started. This was an arduous task which was achieved by making huge sacrifices.

The Hindu community in the Sind province was destitute and was mistreated and exploited by the Muslim landowners. Seeing this, the Christian missions offered them financial help and thus influenced them towards Christianity. *Waqf-e-Jadid* carried out the huge task of bringing this Hindu community into Ahmadiyyat and continues to do so to this day. In the early days a Jama'at was established in *Thar* and the adjoining areas and many among them became life devotees (*Waqf-e-Zindagi*). Hazoor said he would notice their extraordinary sincerity when they came for Jalsa at Rabwah.

Speaking of the early *mu'allumeen* who went to the rural parts of Pakistan, Hazoor said they would carry medicines with them for their own use as well as for the people whom they met. Nowadays there are mobile dispensaries and many doctors also visit. The Ahmadies of Pakistan have made enormous sacrifices for this scheme for their moral training and Tabligh and continue to do so. The task has greatly expanded now.

Hazoor[aba] drew the attention of the Ahmadi landowners of Sind to extend kindness to the disadvantaged Hindu community or to those among them who have now become Muslims. Hazoor[aba] said these people leave their homes and come out to the areas where there is a facility of water to earn a livelihood. Hazoor[aba] said we have to win their hearts over with love and affection.

Since this scheme was made world-wide in 1985 by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh], Hazoor gave this brief introduction aiming it at the younger people as well as those who have come into the Community recently. The Jama'at in Pakistan is now self-sufficient; however in 1985 this scheme was extended to the whole world so that

with the help of everyone's contributions, in particular of the Jama'ats in Western countries, *Waqf-e-Jadid* could be set in motion in India. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] had expressed grave concern over some anti-Ahmadiyya movement within India at the time and decided to counter it by the implementation of *Waqf-e-Jadid* Scheme.

Hazoor[aba] said as we all know the Community is progressing at a great speed. As a result of this our needs are increasing as well. With the grace of Allah people of the Community are also being blessed individually. Therefore, as ever, we need to be mindful of financial sacrifices so that we may help the financially weak Jama'ats. The Jama'at in India, as well as those in Africa, make endeavors but they need the help of the Jama'ats of countries with strong economies. Referring to the Qur'anic verse recited at the beginning Hazoor[aba] said, Allah declares that the reward of those who give in His way is with Him alone and these people should never fear that giving would cause a shortfall in their wealth. Elsewhere the Qur'an states that their reward would be 700-fold or greater. Indeed the Promised Messiah[as] said that financial giving strengthens faith. It is the requisite of the love of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) for each Ahmadi to, as ever, come forward in financial giving and to train the new-converts into doing so.

Hazoor[aba] said at the present time there is a huge number of people whose moral training has to be undertaken on an extensive scale and a tremendous amount of funds are needed for this. The Community tries to utilize its funds in the most economically-sound manner. The majority of our Community is underprivileged, therefore, on each level the administration of the Community should be mindful that the funds are used to seek the pleasure of Allah and to help His creation. As long as we use this principle, our funds will be blessed.

A few in the Community who are affluent do not make corresponding monetary contributions and are believed to comment/opine that the Community is quite well-off. Whether the Community is well-off or not it certainly seems so to the critics and the opponents. Hazoor[aba] said to collect funds to implement our plans there will always be schemes of financial giving. When the funds are being used to strengthen faith and when there is God's assurance that its reward is with Him and people who give will have no fear, what better return could one want for one's money? If ever there is any failing in utilizing the funds, the person who has given has already earned their reward with Allah. If any Ahmadi ever feels any doubt they should get rid of it.

Addressing the Jama'at in India, Hazoor[aba] said that although they are provided with funds there is room for improvement in their moral training and Tabligh programs. They need to approach this with renewed vigor and fervor. Some consideration seems to have been made as there is an increase of 4000 in the participants in *Waqf-e-Jadid* this year and there is also an increase in the per capita contribution. However, further attention needs to be paid as India only meets 3% of their own needs, whereas 97% is provided by other countries. Hazoor[aba] said he was giving out these facts and figures so that the Jama'at in India may be further focused. Hazoor[aba] said as the world-wide *Waqf-e-Jadid* contributions are barely meeting the needs of India, the needs of Africa have to

be met in other ways. The wealthy Jama'ats should be mindful that support needs to be provided to the Jama'ats in India and Africa. Often excuses are presented that the attention or focus of giving has been made on other projects. Hazoor[aba] said the situation in Pakistan is such that the worse the condition of the Jama'at gets the greater is their spirit of giving. They seem to rebound from difficult situations to huge giving. In other countries where the Community is undergoing aggravation the level of giving also increases. Other countries should not sit and wait for trouble before they increase in sacrifices.

Citing individual assessments of *Waqf-e-Jadid* contributions of countries, Hazoor[aba] started with Canada and said most of them are from Pakistan with roots in India, and India had a great right on them. Hazoor[aba] said their per capita contribution needs improving. €15 is per capita for the German Jama'at and although their number of contributors is sound the per capita contribution is not enough. The per capita contribution for the USA Jama'at is $137 and there is room for improvement. In UK the per capita contribution is £34, which Hazoor[aba] said comes to £2.75 per month. A perspective on this would be that the chips people buy to treat their children cost more than this. Among the UK regions the percentage of participation is best in Scotland followed by Southwest, whereas the South region has the least participation by percentage. Again among the UK Jama'at, the London Mosque area came first as far as per capita contribution goes, followed by Worcester Park.

Hazoor[aba] said, of course one is not supposed to over-burden oneself and has to look after the needs of the family. However family expenses should not be unrestrained and should not be fuelled by brazen commercialism. Children should be coached in giving, to give out of their pocket money, so that in future it becomes their key preference.

Hazoor[aba] said he had worked out that if families living in the West, who frequently treated their children to burgers and such like, rather then eat out, if twice a month, they saved the money instead to give it to *Waqf-e-Jadid*, there could be a 20% to 30% increase in the contribution.

Hazoor[aba] said he would like to announce that the Jama'ats in the West should entrust the *Waqf-e-Jadid* scheme to their children. It will not be a burden. They should be trained to save on small levels and thus the needs of India as well as Africa will be met.

Giving the specific facts and figures of the *Waqf-e-Jadid* year 2006 Hazoor said the overall donations received stand at £ 2,225,000 with Pakistan in the first place, followed by USA and then UK.

Hazoor[aba] said despite the fall in the global exchange rate Pakistan has managed to hold onto its 1st position. The exchange of the USA $ has fallen as well but the spirit of sacrifice of the poor has won. Hazoor[aba] said to the Pakistan Jama'at to ever keep this spirit of giving alive.

Hazoor[aba] said Ahmadies should never be weary of giving and should not tire after making a specific contribution to a specific scheme and the thought to suffice on one decent contribution to a particular project should never even enter one's thoughts. The wealth that will be of any avail in the Hereafter will be that which is spent in Allah's cause.

Hazoor[aba] said today there is a lot of focus on building mosques worldwide. Attention to any other project or scheme should not deter from the aim to build mosques. In the UK there is a plan to make five mosques a year, this task should be carried out concurrently with others. Mosques are a tremendous source of moral training.

Recounting his recent European trip Hazoor[aba] said its main purpose was to lay the foundation stone of the Berlin Mosque. Hazoor briefly explained the local opposition met in Berlin to the building of the mosque and how on the day the foundation stone was laid Allah facilitated another local group to prevent the opposing group from their protestations. As in his last Friday Sermon Hazoor[aba] reiterated that it was the strong desire of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] to have a mosque built in Berlin and it is surprising to note the extensive planning he had for the mosque. Despite that the current price of land is extremely high we have been able to get a land plot in excess of one acre for the mosque. For now, the mosque will have a capacity for five hundred worshippers and *Insha Allah* it has the potential for extension later.

As with the initial funds raised for the Berlin mosque many decades ago, this time it is also Lajna (Germany) who is raising the money to build the mosque. Hazoor[aba] prayed that may Allah enable them to fulfill their promise. This mosque is named 'Khadija Mosque' after that pure lady who was the first to accept the faith in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and who sacrificed all her wealth in his way.

Hazoor[aba] prayed that may those ladies who have set great standards in financial giving also set standards of *taqwa* and may they also make the mosque flourish in spreading the Unity of God to the corners of the world and may they fulfill the purpose of the advent of the Promised Messiah[as].

May Allah bring that day soon when we witness the world gather under the banner of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and be inclined to the One God. Ameen!

NOTE: Alislam Team takes full responsibility for any errors or miscommunication in this Synopsis of the Friday Sermon

Fighting the Satanic Forces of the Age

In this age, the Holy Prophet[saw] and Islam have been reviled in abusive writings to a degree which has no parallel among any other Prophet in any age.... In this age, Satan, along with all his followers, is trying his utmost to destroy Islam. Without a doubt, this is the final battle between truth and falsehood. Thus, this age deserves the advent of a Divinely commissioned one for its reformation. And he is the Promised Messiah, who is present among you. This age required that, at this delicate moment in time, God should provide a conclusive argument with heavenly signs. These heavenly signs are now being exhibited. Heaven is eager to exhibit so many signs as would blow the trumpet of the victory of Islam in every country and every part of world. O Mighty Lord, hasten Thou the day which Thou hast willed to be made manifest. Let Thy glory shine forth in the world and let the victory of Thy faith and Thy Messenger be proclaimed. Ameen.

*[**Chashma**-e-Ma'rifat, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 23, pp. 94-95]*

CHASTITY – ESSENTIAL FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE

Nasir M. Malik, National Tarbiyyat Secretary

(2006 USA West Coast Jalsa Salana, Pomona, CA)

Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High. Who creates and perfects, and Who designs and guides. *(Al-A'la, 87:2-4)*

The second Condition of *Bai'at*, as laid out by Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as], the Promised Messiah and Mahdi of this age, reads:

He/She shall keep away from falsehood, fornication, adultery, trespasses of the eye, debauchery, mischief and rebellion; and will not permit himself/herself to be carried away by passions, however strong they may be.

The announced topic of my speech is Chastity – Essential for the Preservation of the Institution of Marriage. However, in Islam, chastity is essential for achieving the Purpose of our Creation (that purpose being the worship of Allah through complete submission to His Will), and marriage is a means of preserving one's chastity. Therefore, I have elected to deviate from the assigned topic and focus more on the broader Islamic teachings about chastity and their ramifications.

In a modest Islamic society open discussion on chastity is deemed taboo. In this society, however, chastity is taboo. Here chastity is not considered much of a value. Under the 'don't ask, don't tell' modus operandi, it is rather immaterial whether one is chaste or not; incitements and opportunities for unchaste behavior abound; and chaste behavior is perceived as geeky, un-cool or antisocial.

To get a sense of how unchaste this society has become, consider a reality check survey recently posted on CNN.com. According to this survey, 95% of Americans have had premarital sex. Add to it the post-marital adulterous behavior, and then the same-sex relationships – you get the picture. I hope and pray that we Ahmadi Muslims are in the less than 5% chaste minority.

In this shameless environment, the weak or naïve are at a serious risk of unwittingly slipping into unchaste behavior. It is this alarming prospect that compels us to have a candid discussion on this topic so we can develop a better appreciation of this precious virtue.

First let me clarify a couple of myths. It is a myth that chastity applies to only unmarried women. Chastity is a virtue that is as essential for the married as it is for the unmarried, both men and women. It is also a myth that chastity is a personal and physical choice. Chastity is a necessity for the physical, emotional, moral and spiritual well being of not only the individual but his or her family and ultimately the society at large.

Now, what is chastity? The root word for chastity in Arabic is *iffa* which means purity, modesty, decency, virtue, abstinence, and continence (that is self-restraint, especially from sexual intercourse).

CHASTE primarily implies a refraining from acts or even thoughts or desires that are not virginal or not sanctioned by the marriage vows.

PURE differs from CHASTE in implying innocence and absence of temptations rather than control of one's impulses and actions.

MODEST and **DECENT** apply especially to deportment and dress as outward signs of inward chastity and purity.

The Promised Messiah[as] explains chastity as *ihsuan* (with a *suad*). He writes:

This expression connotes the virtue that is related to the faculty of procreation of men and women. Those men and women would be called chaste who refrain altogether from illicit sex and all approaches to it, the consequence of which is disgrace and humiliation for both parties in this world and chastisement in the hereafter, and dishonor and grave harm for those related to them.

Explaining the significance and criticality of chastity in his Commentary on *Surah Al-Noor*, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II[ra] writes:

"Chastity as a moral virtue holds a very high place in the code of Islamic laws that govern relation between sexes. This *Surah* has laid down comprehensive commandments to safeguard and protect it. Islam views even the slightest breach of these laws with extreme disapprobation.

Sexual urges are natural just like any other human urge, and no urge is inherently good or bad; it is how we react to it that determines our goodness. And, the criteria for goodness and the proper response to all natural urges are determined by our Creator. As I recited the Qur'anic verses in the beginning, all praise belongs to Him Who has not only designed and created and perfected everything, but Who has provided us with the Holy Qur'an, the perfect guidance for how to properly use and benefit from His design and creation.

Thus, the Qur'anic Teachings are like the laws of nature. If we breach these laws we suffer the consequences thereof, like fire burns and poison kills; and we don't have to get burned to realize that playing with fire is risky. Regarding the sexual urges, the Holy Qur'an fundamentally teaches us total abstinence before marriage and extra-marital abstinence after marriage. This in a nutshell is chastity. All other related teachings are to explain, promote and facilitate chastity.

In abstract, the Islamic teachings and expectations about chastity and the consequences of unchaste behavior may seem idealistic, too harsh and untenable, especially in our promiscuous society. However, if we consider Islamic teachings holistically, chastity is not only germane to the purpose of our creation, it is essential for our physical, moral and spiritual success.

Thus, we must focus on preventing unchaste behavior. The Promised Messiah[as] writes that, as this vice and its preliminaries can be practiced by both men and women, Allah has set forth directions in the Holy Qur'an for both of them. He explains *Surah*

Al-Noor (24:31-32), as follows:

"Direct the believing men to restrain their eyes from looking at women outside the prohibited degrees so openly as to be sexually excited by them, and to cultivate the habit of guarding their looks. They should safeguard all their senses. For instance, they should not listen to the singing or charming voices of women outside the prohibited degrees nor should they listen to descriptions of their beauty. This is a good way of preserving the purity of their looks and hearts. In the same way, direct the believing women that they should restrain their eyes from looking at men outside the prohibited degrees and should safeguard their ears against listening to the passionate voice of such men. They should cover up their beauty and should not disclose it to anyone outside the prohibited degrees."

The prohibited degrees referred to here are clearly mentioned in *Surah Al-Noor (24:32)*, and mean the persons whom we are prohibited to marry. So, any person whom we can conceivably marry would be outside the prohibited degrees, including cousins and boy-friends or girl-friends of friends.

Now, *purdah* and *ghadd-e-basar* are the two fundamental concepts that underlie the chaste behavior. Expounding on the philosophy of *purdah*, the Promised Messiah[as] writes:

The Book of God does not aim at keeping women in seclusion like prisoners. The purpose of these regulations is to restrain men and women from letting their eyes rove freely and from displaying their good looks and beauty, for therein lays the good both of men and of women.

Similarly, regarding *ghadd-e-basar*, the Promised Messiah[as] writes:

"It does not behoove a pious person, who desires to keep his heart pure, that he should lift his eyes freely in every direction like an animal. It is necessary that such a one should cultivate the habit of *ghadd-e-basar* in his social life. This is a blessed habit through which his natural impulses would be converted into a high moral quality without interfering with his social needs."

Some people tend to argue that they live in a civilized society and that it is no big deal if they take liberties with these teachings so long as they don't do it with any bad intentions. The Promised Messiah[as], the *Imam* of this age, argues otherwise:

It should be kept in mind that as the natural condition of man, which is the source of his passions, is such that he cannot depart from it without a complete change in himself, his passions are bound to be roused, or in other words put in peril, when they are confronted with the occasion and opportunity for indulging in this vice. Therefore, God Almighty has not instructed us that we might freely gaze at women outside the prohibited degrees and might contemplate their beauty and observe all their movements in dancing etc., but that we should do so with pure looks. Nor have we been instructed to listen to the singing of these women and to lend ear to the tales of their beauty, but that we should do so with pure intent. We have been positively commanded not to look at their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise, nor to listen to their musical voices or to descriptions of their good looks, whether with pure intent or otherwise.

All Khulafa have repeatedly addressed this topic in their times. Most recently, on 11/19/06, during the UK Lajna Imaillah National Ijtema, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masihul V[aba] has very candidly explained his position on this issue and instructed the Lajna leadership to take on this issue and lead by example. Similarly, he has invited our young girls in the west to practice and defend Islamic *purdah*. I would urge all members, men and women, to carefully listen to Hazoor's address.

Now fornication and adultery are the inevitable consequences of unchaste behavior. Regarding adultery, we find in the Holy Qur'an:

Approach not adultery; surely, it is a foul thing and an evil way. *(Bani Israil, 17:33)*

So, to avoid the risk of fornication or adultery, the Promised Messiah[as] writes:

One should avoid all occasions that might incite one's mind in that direction, and should eschew all the paths that might lead to this vice. He who indulges in this vice carries his viciousness to the extreme. The way of adultery is an evil way as it obstructs one's progress towards the goal and is extremely harmful to the achievement of the purpose of life.

Let me briefly refer to some beautiful narrations recorded in the Holy Qur'an that provide us a great insight about chastity and how to preserve it.

First, let us look at the story of Joseph or Hadhrat Yusuf[as]. He was an innocent and handsome young man. Joseph was very grateful to his host and master, Aziz, for his kindness and generosity. Aziz was a respectable leader of the city. However, his wife was attracted to Joseph and tried to seduce him. He tried to run away from her but she persisted and tore his shirt from behind. As Joseph ran to the door, Aziz walked in. To protect herself, she placed all the blame on Joseph. The Holy Qur'an narrates how Joseph persevered and preserved his innocence and honor in that vulnerable situation. It says:

She, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him against his will. And she bolted the doors, and said, 'Now come.' He said, 'I seek refuge with Allah. He is my Lord. He has made my stay with you honorable. Verily, the wrongdoers never prosper.' *(Yusuf, 12:24)*

This narrative shows that Joseph was mindful of the value of chastity and the consequences of wrongdoing. Therefore, instead of playing a victim, he invoked Allah's protection *(ma'azallah)*, and was unequivocally exonerated.

I wish all our boys and men would inculcate Joseph like angelic nobility, innocence and purity. The responsibility for maintaining a chaste society rests with men. Hadhrat Ali[ra] is reported to have said:

Be chaste and your women will be chaste.

Next, let us recall the story of the pure and truthful Mary or Hadhrat Maryam. Allah says:

Remember her who preserved her chastity. *(Al-Anbiya, 21:92)*

She was mortified at the prospect of being touched by a stranger when Allah's angel appeared to her as a perfect man *(bashar an sawiyya)*. The Holy Qur'an has recorded her exemplary anxiety to preserve her chastity and innocence as:

She said, 'I seek refuge with the Gracious One from thee.' *(Maryam, 19:19)*

Our girls and women need to strive like Mary for purity and truthfulness. Unfortunately, today some of our women and girls seem to be impressed by the liberalism of their Christian peers. I wish and pray that they would develop the courage and confidence to adopt Islamic modesty as a badge of their chastity and show their peers how they have lost their innocence and purity in contrast to the standard set by Mary, mother of Christ[as].

And lastly, let us recall the story of Lot or Hadhrat Loot[as]. His people engaged in homosexual behavior and taunted him and his family for their purity and righteousness. Allah says:

Remember Lot, when he said to his people, 'Do you commit abomination while you see *the evil thereof*? What! Do you approach men lustfully rather than women? Nay, you are indeed an ignorant people.' *(Al-Naml, 27:55-56)*

Lot protected himself and his family by praying:

'My Lord, save me and my family from what they do.' *(A-Shuara, 26: 170)*

So, Allah saved Lot and his pure family and destroyed the transgressors, including his wife, with a crushing rain of stones.

Unchaste or adulterous behavior is deemed so abhorrent in Islam that Allah has prescribed its severe consequences in the Holy Qur'an as:

The adulteress and the adulterer – flog each one of them with a hundred stripes. *(Al-Noor, 24:3-4)*

The adulterer cannot have sexual intercourse but with an adulteress or an idolatrous woman, and an adulteress – none can have sexual intercourse with her but an adulterer or an idolatrous man.

These consequences, a severe physical punishment on the one hand and a frightening isolation from chaste believers on the other, are in addition to the natural consequences of disease, infidelity, broken homes, promiscuity, etc.

Now let us look at the role of marriage in Islam. One of the noble purposes of marriage is preservation of chaste behavior. In Islam, marriage is called *hisn*, that is to say, it is like a fort for the husband and the wife to protect each other from any outside physical, emotional or moral attacks and to remain chaste and pure. The married man is called *muhassan* (which means fortified, entrenched or immune) and the married woman is called *muhsina* (which means sheltered and chaste). In Islam, husband and wife are also likened to mutual garments, that is to say, they cover each other's weaknesses, enhance each other's strengths, and protect each other from the environment.

In short, Islamic marriage requires utmost commitment and fidelity, the hallmarks of chastity and modesty.

The Holy Prophet[saw] is reported to have said:

Marriage is my precept and my practice. Those who do not follow my practice are not of me. *(Ibn Majah)*

When a man has married he has completed one half of his religion. *(Mishkat)*

Inferring from *Surah Al-Noor (24:34)* that marriage is a means to preserve chastity, the Promised Messiah[as] writes:

Those who find no

means of marriage should keep themselves chaste through the adoption of other means; like fasting or dieting or exercise.

Now, Islam being the perfect and complete religion for all peoples and for all times, Allah has provided a remedy for any past indiscretions that may have been carried out due to ignorance or heat of the moment. We find in the Holy Qur'an:

Those who, when they commit a foul deed or wrong themselves, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins – and who can forgive sins except Allah? – And do not persist knowingly in what they have done. *(Al-Imran, 3:136)*

We shudder at even the thought of any Ahmadi Muslim engaging in fornication or adultery; what we are concerned with is how to prevent and protect all Ahmadi Muslims from getting close to even its preliminaries. Therefore, in light of the above, I would list some dos and don'ts to preserve and nurture chastity.

Some Risky Behaviors to Avoid:

The Holy Prophet[saw] is reported to have said:

A man shall never be alone with a woman except that the third party between them is Satan. *(Tirmidhi)*

A man must not look at another man's genitals, nor must a woman look at another woman's genitals; nor should two naked men lie under one cover, nor two naked women under the same cover. *(Muslim)*

- Vain pursuits
- Flirting/Dating
- Playful demeanor
- Wandering/Gazing eyes
- Immodest appearance/ dress
- Secret paramours/ relationships
- Fantasizing about the opposite sex
- Posting bios/pictures on internet sites
- Idolizing movie stars, singers, athletes, etc.
- Unnecessary frankness with cousins/friends
- Unnecessary communication with the opposite sex
- Addiction to salacious TV, movies, music, parties, etc.
- Addiction to pornographic books/ magazines, tabloids, etc.
- Addiction to gossip, cell phones, internet chatrooms, IMs, etc.

Some Ways to Avoid Risky Behavior

- Be selective
- Rid passivity
- Limit TV time
- Limit Internet time
- Avoid bad company
- Avoid/Limit movies
- Avoid/Limit Cable/ Dish TV
- Segregate sexes in private gatherings
- Increase candid communication with elders

Some Ways to Promote Chaste Behavior:

- Perform *salaat*
- Increase MTA time
- Keep good company
- Study the lives of the prophets
- Increase Mosque/ Jama'at time
- Read classical/ historical literature
- Increase quality time with the family
- Engage in Jama'at/ community activities, sports, etc.
- Read biographies of great pioneers, leaders, scholars, etc.

Sure it is difficult to remain chaste in this society. But, as Ahmadi Muslims, we must sincerely and seriously strive to fulfill the second condition of *bai'at* I

recited earlier. If we consder ourselves to be the *aakhareena minhum*, the community of *sahabah*, we have to find ways to live like one.

This society, with its 95% plus unchaste population, seems to have lost its battle for chastity. We, as Ahmadi Muslims, have the sacred responsibility to remain steadfast in chastity and to lead others to the chaste path with our personal conduct and fervent prayers. May Allah enable us to do so. *Ameen.*

I will conclude my presentation with one more story. We know fire burns yet there are those who want to feel the pain of burning to deter them from wrong-doing. Once upon a time there was a rich man who had a beautiful young daughter. She went to a picnic with her friends. Upon their return it got dark and stormy and she got separated from her friends. She was scared and lost her way home. In the dark she saw a dim light in a small mosque. She knocked at the door hoping to have someone guide her to her home. A young man opened the door and told her that he himself was new to the area and was temporarily staying in the mosque. He suggested, however, that if she wished she could stay in the mosque till the morning and when the locals would come for *Salaatul Fajr* they would guide her home. Scared of the dark night and lightning and thunder, she gingerly accepted his offer and stepped in.

The next morning she got home safely and told her father her story and said that she could not sleep all night because she watched the young man in the mosque burn all his fingers one by one. Her father was equally awed and went to his spiritual teacher. The holy wise man asked him to send for the man. When the man came, the holy wise teacher asked him about that night. The man said that he was a young man alone with a young woman in that dark night. Satan urged him to approach her but he thought of the fire of hell as the consequence. So he thought that he would put his finger on the candle flame and if he could tolerate the pain of burning, he would approach her. But the pain was too severe to tolerate so he pulled his hand and resisted the temptation. After a while Satan incited him again and he burned his second finger. He said thus he burned all his fingers but preserved his and her chastity.

The holy wise man asked the rich man to marry her daughter to that man. The rich man said how could he do that as his daughter was raised in a comfortable environment and that man was but a poor orphan. The holy wise man told the rich man that you can make him rich with some of your wealth but you can not find such piety in a wealthy man. The rich man complied and married his daughter to that young man.

In the end, I pray for all our youth on behalf of the concerned parents:

Our Lord, grant us of our spouses and children the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous. *(Al-Furqan, 25:75)*

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- Reality check: 95 percent of Americans had premarital sex

  POSTED: 10:07 a.m. EST, December 20, 2006 @ CNN.com

  NEW YORK (AP) -- More than nine out of 10 Americans, men and women alike, have had premarital sex, according to a new study. The high rates extend even to women born in the 1940s, challenging perceptions that people were more chaste in the past.

"This is reality-check research," said the study's author, Lawrence Finer. "Premarital sex is normal behavior for the vast majority of Americans, and has been for decades."

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FAITH

Hadhrat 'Umar bin Khattab[ra] relates that they were sitting in the company of the Holy Prophet[saw] when a man visited him. He was wearing clean, white clothes and his hair was jet black. He did not look as though he were a traveller and he was not known to anyone there. He sat down close to the Holy Prophet[saw], his knees touching the knees of the Holy Prophet[saw]. He said: "O Muhammad! Tell me something about faith. The Holy Prophet[saw] replied: 'Faith is that you should believe in Allah, His Books and His Prophets; that you should believe in the Day of Judgement and that you should believe in the Divine Laws regarding good and evil.' "

(Tirmadhi kitabul Iman bab fi wasaf Jibrilunnabi al-Ima-n wal-Islam)

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The Holy Prophet Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa[saw]

Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin Abu Bakr[ra] relates that an Arab told him: "In the rush of the battle of Hunain, I severely injured the foot of the Holy Prophet's[saw] with a hard sandal I was wearing,. The Holy Prophet[saw] tapped me lightly with a whip and said, 'In the name of Allah! You have hurt me.' I was very much ashamed. I passed the night rebuking myself that I had hurt the Holy Prophet[saw]. Only God Knows how I passed the night. In the morning, someone told me that the Holy Prophet[saw] was asking for me. I be-came very worried that maybe I have been summoned to face the punishment for yesterday's mistake. Anyway, when I went to see the Holy Prophet[saw], he very affectionately said, 'Yesterday you crushed my foot which caused me severe pain and I hit you lightly with a whip. Take these eighty goats as compensation.' "

(Musnad Darmi bab fi sakha'annabiyyu[sa], p 36/1)

CHOOSING A SPOUSE, ACCORDING TO THE ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

Haidar Ali Zafar,

Missionary In-Charge Ahmadiyya Jama'at Germany,

Translated by Belal Khalid

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] addressing the ladies in 1990 said, "Homes are breaking in the East and homes are breaking in the West. Our lord and master, Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] is the only one who is making homes. It is only his teachings that could reform the East and the West. World peace cannot be guaranteed in this age unless tranquility, satisfaction, and internal peace at home is guaranteed."

(address delivered on July 28th 1990, at UK Islamabad, Monthly Misbah Rabwah, Sep 1990, page 16)

One cause of this social upheaval and the breakage of homes is the wrongful choice of spouses that has turned into a tragic loss especially in the completely unrestrained western society. In addition to devastating the peace and tranquility of life at home, it has flooded the society with sexual promiscuity. This meaningless freedom has captured people's mind so much that unaware of the real consequences they are chasing after only the outward and short-lived glamour and pleasure. We are all aware of the European way of life and how spouses are chosen. Here boys and girls look for their spouses themselves. First they make friends, explore and assess each other from every angle and live together. During this course friendships are made and broken. Many years are spent like this and some of these friendships do turn into real marriages. These days the trend to live together without marriage is steeply rising.

This way of choosing a spouse is widely publicized in the name of freedom and love in the West. The deadly outcome that these nations are forced to face is obvious to us. The fall in the number of legal marriages, rise in divorces, treatment of kids like abandoned kids, rise of crimes among children, rape cases in spite of the freedom, increase in sexual lust and the act of murdering children in this lust, are results of the sexual promiscuity which is called love by these people.

We should always adopt the principle to look at the pros and cons of the method utilized to resolve an issue at the individual level and at the level of the society. This principle, if followed through has great benefits and usefulness for us. Those people who adopt a particular method for short-term gains and pleasures are always at a loss.

Allah is our Creator and Lord and knows all our abilities, strengths and weaknesses. Therefore we believe that only the ways of life taught by Allah through his prophets could guarantee peace for our lives. The Islamic way of choosing a spouse is in fact taught by Allah, and if acted upon could make our homes abode of peace and tranquility. This was Allah's intention for making pairs. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an,

وَ مِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖۤ اَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَزْوَاجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوْۤا اِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَّوَدَّةً وَّرَحْمَةً ؕ

"And *one* of His Signs *is this*, that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He

has put love and tenderness between you." (Al-Rum, 30:22)

It is not inconceivable that some of our youths who grew up in the west are influenced by the western ways of finding spouses. They definitely talk to their non-Muslim friends on this topic and certain questions rise in their minds. For example when a girl and a boy do not know each other, are not aware of each other's habits, manners, abilities, and in some cases have not even seen each other, is it correct to bind them in the relationship of a marriage? One youth wrote me, are arranged marriages really practical in this age? What is the benefit of marrying someone for the entire life if you do not know him or her well? Another common view is that Muslim parents do not consult their children, especially girls, and often look for spouses among their relatives and marry their children against their wishes. Some families have exchange marriages where the wishes of the boys or the girls are completely overlooked. Another frequently raised question is that why Muslim girls cannot marry without a guardian, while there is no such restriction for boys. All these things are said to be against common sense, propriety, and justice. This humble one will briefly present answers to the above questions. (May Allah enable me, *Wa billah-e-taufique*)

First this principle should be understood that according to Islam the peace and purity of conduct at home and society have foremost importance with reference to the social life. **Islam definitely does not promote any such way of life that threatens social peace, purity and integrity.** Under this basic principle when we scrutinize the method of choice of a spouse in the western society we find that not only has it completely annihilated both these kinds of peace from the society but also resulted in a wide-spread sexual promiscuity that has engulfed the whole society and created innumerous other issues.

Let's take a brief look at this issue with respect to the statistics of broken homes in this society. When we looked at the marriages and divorces in Germany in the last century, we see that 20% of the marriages broke in the 70s. This ratio increased in 80s and 90s. In the 21st century this ratio has increased to more than 50%. There is no room for such a way of choosing a spouse according to the Islamic teachings.

Important and fundamental advice with respect to the choice of spouse

Now I will describe some of the guidance provided by Islam with respect to the choice of spouse. Allah says in the Holy Qu'an:

اَلْيَوْمَ اُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبٰتُ ؕ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ حِلٌّ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ ۫ وَ الْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ وَ الْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ اِذَآ اٰتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِيْنَ غَيْرَ مُسٰفِحِيْنَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِيْٓ اَخْدَانٍ ؕ

"This day all good things have been made lawful for you. And the food of the People of the Book is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them. *And lawful for you are* chaste believing women and chaste women from among those who were given the Book before you, when you give them their dowries, contracting valid marriage and not committing fornication nor taking secret paramours." (Al-Maida, 5:6)

In this verse it is clearly advised to **choose pure and religious women and stay away from friendships and sexual misconducts before marriages.** This verse especially applies to the conditions in the West where there are more opportunities to marry women of the book. As the result of friendship without legal marriage is definitely misconduct, therefore the Holy Qur'an has discussed its prohibition in detail. Islam does allow marriage with women of the book under special circumstances but with the conditions which are mentioned in this holy verse.

The second fundamental and principle advice given by Islam with respect to the choice of spouse is to **give**

preference to the pure conduct and character over physical beauty, features and family or clan. All people are equal according to the teachings of Islam. White people have no supremacy or dominance over Black, or Arabic over non-Arabic because of color, clan or nation. Facial features, wealth and other material things are transient in nature and fade with time, while good manners and righteous character become more conspicuous with time and their fragrance turns houses into paradise. The Islamic teachings beautifully cover all aspects of this subject. The people who discard these teachings are buyers of loss, sin, and disorder in the spiritual world as well as the material world.

So Allah *Ta'ala* says,

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيْرًا وَّ نِسَآءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيْبًا ۝

"O ye people! Fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created there from its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women; and fear Allah, in Whose name you appeal to one another, and Fear Him particularly respecting ties of relationship. Verily, Allah watches over you." (Al-Nisa, 4:2)

Similarly Allah *Ta'ala* says:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَّاُنْثٰى وَجَعَلْنٰكُمْ شُعُوْبًا وَّ قَبَاۗىِٕلَ لِتَعَارَفُوْا ۭ اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اَتْقٰىكُمْ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ خَبِيْرٌ ۝

"O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize one another. Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (Al-Hujrat, 49:14)

The Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad[saw] says in this respect:

عَنْ اَبِيْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ تُنْكَحُ الْمَرْاَةُ لِاَرْبَعٍ لِمَالِهَا وَلِحَسَبِهَا وَلِجَمَالِهَا وَلِدِيْنِهَا فَاظْفَرْ بِذَاتِ الدِّيْنِ تَرِبَتْ يَدَاكَ۔

بخاری کتاب النکاح باب الاکفاء فی الدین

"Meaning that marriage to a woman could be done because of four reasons, either because of wealth and possessions, or tribe and family, or beauty and splendor, or character and religion. But O believers! you should always choose a wife because of religion and character and give preference to personal attributes and personal piety otherwise your hands will always be dusty"

(Bukhari, Kitabun Nikah Babul Kufa Fid-din)

Give preference to religion and character

According to a Hadith, the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad[saw] said, "Accept a proposal if you like the piety and character of the person. If you do not do this, you will cause disorder and chaos in the world." Someone wanted to ask a question to the Holy Prophet of Islam[saw], but he repeated this three times, accept a proposal if you like the piety and character of the person.

(Tirmadhi, Kitabun Nikah)

In this Hadith, the Holy Prophet of Islam[saw] has called parents attention towards accepting the proposal of religious persons. There is also Allah's promise that He will remove any material shortcomings if one is steadfast on religion. Therefore when proposals come for girls, they should not be overly delayed if there is satisfaction regarding the religious inclination of the boy. Similarly the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad[saw] advised boys to look at a girl's piety and character instead of her physical appearance, worldly status, and affluence.

Real meaning of Religion

The reason beauty and wealth are not made standards for choosing spouses may be due to their transitory nature. In the world of beauty there are many who are prettier than others. In the world of wealth,

there are many who are wealthier than others. One will never find satisfaction if these things are picked as standards. Religion is more appropriate for a standard as it is permanent and helps in the hereafter besides in this world. Religion does not only mean prayers and fasting, it actually engulfs all aspects of human life.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] said, "Religion is not the name of any special thing, it is the name of prayers, it is the name of fasting, it is the name of Hajj, and Zakat, it is the name of hard work, it is the name of spirituality, it is the name of a thousand things. A skilled worker when he works hard is religious, an employee who works hard for his job is religious, a hard working laborer is religious, a farmer who works hard on his farm is religious, in short religion has extensive meanings. So

عَلَيْكَ بِذَاتِ الدِّيْنِ

means that she fulfills her own responsibilities and helps out her husband in fulfilling his responsibilities. When this is accomplished, it completely eradicates turmoil and disorder. Everyone demands one's own rights in this world, but a religious person fights for the rights of other people.

(Khutbat-e-Mahmood, third volume, page 507, Khutba Nikah Sep 7th, 1940)

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] at the time of announcements of Nikah greatly emphasized the purity of the intention for choosing a spouse. Then under

قُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا

he taught us to say words of truth, steadfastness, firmness, reformation, and piety. It is imperative to stay away from lies at the time of matrimonial affairs. Anything founded on sin stays bad till the end.

This is the blessed teachings that could turn our homes into paradise. The fundamental guidance provided by our religion for choosing a spouse is the root of all good and excellence.

The instructions provided by our beloved Prophet Muhammad[saw] regarding the choice of a spouse include the preference of religious aspects over other things. Contrarily some people at the time of choosing a spouse give preference to worldly standards over piety and *taqwa*. They raise their worldly standard so much that they do not consider proposals from other people and thus follow the path of loss for their children rather than profit.

In Islam there is no consideration for nation. It only cares about *taqwa* and piety

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] says, "Our people also have this very bad habit that they do not like to give their daughters to people of other nations. This is purely an act of self-pride and bad manners which is totally against the *shariah* (The Islamic law). All human beings are God's people. At the time of choosing a spouse only piety and good-nature of the person should be considered and that he is not under any trouble that could cause issues. It should be remembered that there is no consideration of nation in Islam, it only cares about *taqwa* and piety.

(Majmooa Ishtiharat, first volume, page 70)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] once discussing the trend to prefer other standards over *taqwa* and useless mother-daughter interference in this matter said,

"Some people want it (*rishtas*) above their own standards. Some girls are getting old awaiting proposals of higher standards. They should look at their own standard and accept proposals of their own level. God has appointed the father as the guardian, but in some cases mothers are unjustly over-bearing to the father, and girls also take the mother's side. There is no solution for those girls except that they get old sitting at home. They have set a high the standard, but the other families also have to look at standard. One who is looking for a girl also has a standard in mind. The one sided demand for a higher standard is a big sin, and a great curse in our matrimonial affairs and should be eradicated. Allah has made the father the guardian, not the mother. Therefore, the mother

should never interfere with the father in where he wants to wed their daughter, she should actually convince her daughter that the father is not her enemy, God has made him the guardian. Therefore daughters should marry where their fathers desire, otherwise they will age sitting home and no one will ask for them."

(Al-Fazal, March 28th, 2001)

He further said, "It is bad to give too much consideration to facial and physical features. What I am saying to you is really beneficial for you. It would be good to get a handsome boy, but if you do not, then keep in mind that character and religion are more important. Otherwise many girls would keep on waiting while their parents look for good matches. They have high standards, they do not find boys who meet their standard and the girls get old sitting home.

(Al-Fazal, August 20th, 2002)

Advice regarding knowing each other before marriage

As far as the boy and the girl knowing each other before marriage is considered, one part of it is clear from the verses of *Surah Al-Maida* that I quoted in the beginning, that there is a clear prohibition of establishing friendship in the pretext of knowing each other before the marriage as it invariably results in sexual misconduct.

As far as the seeing of the boy and the girl is considered, Islam definitely permits it up to a certain level. There is a Hadith quoted by Hadhrat Mughira[ra] that once he sent an engagement proposal to someone. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] said to see the girl as it would improve the probability of mutual understanding and love *(Tirmadhi)*.

Now the question is that seeing each other once or twice may be enough to judge the physical appearance of a person, but not enough to know the habits and character. As mentioned in the above Hadith, according to Islam, it is important to consider the religious inclination and character of a person when looking for a match. The answer to this question is that according to Islam, the choice of a spouse is not left only to the boy and the girl. The parents and elders of the family are fully involved in finding and choosing a suitable match for their children. Obviously in addition to collecting the necessary information about the boy or the girl, his/her habits and character, they also look at the other members of the family to their satisfaction and try their best to find a match for their children with good looks and good character. Since the Muslim boys and girls are aware of this procedure, they are content that their elders would find a suitable match for them. Once parents are satisfied there is no restriction in Islam for the boy and the girl to see each other.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] said about this very aspect of finding a match, "There are thousands of such examples in Europe where a devious and dishonest but handsome boy wedded into a well-off family and caused many kinds of issues. This does not happen in our country as here the father contemplates, the mother thinks, brothers think, relatives do their assessment and the matches made as a result are usually free of the issues found in Europe. In Europe this problem is so wide-spread that the sister of the ex-emperor of Germany wedded a handsome chef who posed as a Russian prince. It was found after the marriage that he worked as a cook at some place.

(Tafseer-e-Kabir, volume II, page 513, 514)

No compulsion in choosing a spouse

It should be remembered that as far as the observation that Muslim parents force their will on their children, and especially do not ask for approval in case of girls, this is not in accordance with the Islamic teachings. If parents do this, it is their personal act and it should not be associated with Islam. In the Ahmadiyya Jama'at in order to ensure this, the President of the Jama'at has to certify that the witnesses testified in his presence that the girl signed

the form of her own will. It is also important to mention here that it is mandatory for the marriages that take place in Court to announce the legal marriage, because the marriages in Court neither require the consent of the guardian nor a dowry is fixed. Therefore it is must for the protection of the girl that the legal marriage is publicly announced.

The wisdom behind the requirement of a guardian's consent for the marriage of a girl

A question is raised that in Islam, girls are not free to choose a spouse as they cannot marry without guardian's consent. We should remember that Islam has given equal rights to men and women in this regard. Like men, women also have the full right to choose a spouse. When a young girl reaches puberty, Islam offers every sane and adult woman the full right to choose a spouse. Though the agreement and consent of guardian or elder of a girl is mandatory in Islam, but this regulation is beneficial and important for girls because they would have to suffer the consequences for the rest of their lives if they make a mistake because of their inexperience. The guardian is not permitted to marry a girl against her wishes. If a girl knowingly wants to marry a person of her liking with good character, no one has the right and the authority to stop her. Islam has adopted the middle course in this matter. It does not permit as in the Hindu community to let the father marry his daughter wherever he desires, nor does it allow the girl to establish pre-marital relationships in order to know the person.

Islam has taught us the middle course, on one hand it advises the fair sex to consult the elders to benefit from their experiences and mandated the consent of a guardian or custodian, on the other hand it has clearly ruled that the marriage cannot take place without the approval and wishes of the girl. Our lord, Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] said that the right to decide for herself in matrimonial affairs compared to the guardian that, "Consent should be sought for unmarried girls and her silence could be considered permission."

(Sunan-e-Darmi, Kitabun Nikah,)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] after describing the above Hadith in one of his sermons mentioned, "So it is clarified that widows have a higher right, but a guardian's decision is required for unmarried girls as Allah's instructions are for the betterment and peace of the society. A widow has been given this authority as she has experienced the ups and downs of the world and usually decides after contemplation. But an unmarried girl could naively make wrong decisions, therefore the authority for choosing her spouse has been delegated to her guardian. Nevertheless she has been given the right to approach the administration of the Jama'at for decision if she disagrees with the decision of her guardian or father but she is not allowed to take steps on her own as this could lead to issues and disorder in the society instead of goodness and piety.

(Friday sermon, December 24th, 2004, Paris, France, published in daily Al-Fazal of April 12, 2005)

As men are allowed to marry girls of their choice, similarly women are allowed to choose men of their choice and liking.

Muslims are not allowed to marry non-believers

At this point, there is a need to clarify that Islam does not allow a Muslim man or woman to marry a non-believer. Instructions about this are found in three places in the Holy Qur'an. First, it is mentioned in *Surah Al-Baqarah:*

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكٰتِ حَتّٰى يُؤْمِنَّ ۚ وَلَاَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَّلَوْ اَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتّٰى يُؤْمِنُوْا ۚ

"And marry not idolatrous women until they believe; even a believing bondwoman is better than an idolatress, although she may highly please you. And give not believing women in marriage to

idolaters until they believe" (Al-Baqarah, 2:222)

It is instructed in the verses of *Surah Mumtahana* revealed after Hudaibya's accord that the Nikah of a Muslim woman cannot stay with a non-believer man and it is not permitted for a Muslim man to marry a non-believer woman. So Allah *Ta'ala* says,

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا جَآءَكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنٰتُ مُهٰجِرٰتٍ فَامْتَحِنُوْهُنَّ ۭ اَللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِاِيْمَانِهِنَّ ۚ فَاِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوْهُنَّ مُؤْمِنٰتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوْهُنَّ اِلَى الْكُفَّارِ ۭ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّوْنَ لَهُنَّ ۭ

"O ye who believe! When believing women come to you as Refugees, examine them. Allah knows best their faith. Then, if you find them true believers, send them not back to the disbelievers. These women are not lawful for them, nor are they lawful for these women." (Al-Mumtahana, 60:11)

To summarize, Islam does not permit Muslim men or women to marry atheists or non-believers. I would like to further clarify this point here that the verses I quoted earlier permitting to marry people of the book, and people of the book only include Christians and Jews.

Importance of *kufuv*

It is important for the parents of the boy or the girl to assess the environment of the other house. It should be ensured to the best that the girl and the boy have compatibility of minds. Probably for the same reason the *Fiqah* Ahmadiyya (regulations for individuals) has a clause which says that it is better for men and women to have *kufuv*. Literally *kufuv* means to be of the same class and equal. *Fiqah*, under some situations has accepted the social requirement for the men and women to be of the same class because the real purpose of *kufuv* is to produce compatibility and understanding in the marital life of the partners. Religion, religious inclination, and social class are critical elements of *kufuv*. In addition it is socially beneficial and blessed to consider status, profession, education, age and health. Therefore it is imperative to consider *kufuv*. Ignoring disposition, religious inclination, and education usually produces poor results. Nevertheless, religious *kufuv* and equality is pivotal in all these matters.

Religious *kufuv*

In consideration of the cultural, social, religious, and training issues, Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya does not allow an Ahmadi woman to marry a non-Ahmadi man. Such a marriage falls outside the religious sphere of the *kufuv*. Love marriage is very popular in the West, some of our youths who are not fully aware of the wisdom and philosophy behind the Islamic teachings in this regard consider the Jama'at's instructions an impediment in their desire to choose a spouse of their liking. Therefore I consider it necessary to present the Jama'at's instructions in detail in this regard.

The announcement published on 7th June, 1898 by Hadhrat Promised Messiah[as] included the prohibition of the marriages of Ahmadies with non-Ahmadies, and also laid the foundation of a new system for marriages within the Jama'at.

He said, "Because of the blessings, grace, and the esteemed favors of Allah *Ta'ala*, our Jama'at is rapidly progressing in numbers and now has reached up to thousands, and soon will reach hundreds of thousands by the blessings of Allah *Ta'ala*. Therefore to promote unity among the Jama'at and to save them from the bad influence of our adversaries and its consequences it was considered wise to organize a good system for the *Nikahs* of the boys and the girls. It is obvious that new marriages of our Jama'at members are impossible with those people who have acquired full bias, enmity, deceit, and hostility towards us under the influence of our opponent Maulvis unless they repent and enter our Jama'at.

Then he said, "I have arranged a confidential and classified register that will remain in my possession with names of the girls and the boys of the Jama'at. If parents of a girl do not find a suitable boy in their community from

within the Jama'at with good character, and desired intellect, or a suitable girl, then it should be obligatory on them to allow us to find a suitable match from the Jama'at. Everyone should rest assured that we will look for spouses for their children like a real sympathizer and commiserate of the parents. We will also try our best to find matches from their community or from a community which is known to be amenable to matches outside the community. Mostly it will be ensured that the boy or the girl is pious, intelligent, and good-natured.

(Majmu'a Ishtiharat, volume III, page 50)

When an Ahmadi sought written permission from Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] for marrying his daughter to a non-Ahmadi boy, He got the following letter by Hadhrat Mufti Mohammad Sadiq[ra] written on behalf of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as]:

"Dear Brother, Assalamo Alaikum! Received your letter which was appropriately presented to Hadhrat Sahib (Masih Mau'ood[as]). Hadhrat Sahib said that this procedure is completely against his traditions that he gives his daughter to someone who is not in our Jama'at. This is a sin. He said, write to him that this was the time of his test, religion should be preferred over the world. Companions[ra] killed their fathers and sons for the sake of religion. He cannot even upset his daughter for the sake of religion?"

Muhammad Sadiq, humble servant, may Allah forgive me, Qadian, April 17th, 1907

(Reference, Log Kiya Kahain Gay, published by Lajna Ima' Ullah, Bharat, page 43)

Similarly someone's request was presented to Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] that his sister was engaged to a non-Ahmadi, and should it be continued or not? He said,

"The breaking of an unlawful promise and reformation is necessary. Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] had vowed not to eat honey, God Almighty ordered him to break such a vow. Moreover on engagement is done to find out good and bad during the course of the engagement. An engagement is not a *Nikah*, and breaking it is not a sin."

(Badar, June 7th, 1907, reference, Log kiya Kahain Gay, published by Lajna Ima' Ullah, Bharat, page 44)

Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad[ra] in his book, *Silsila Ahmadiyya* (Ahmadiyya Movement) describing Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood's[as] instruction regarding the prohibition of the marriage of Ahmadi girls to non-Ahmadi boys, said, "This was the initial form of this instruction which was further clarified later. The wisdom behind this instruction was that due to the physical and legal matters men has administrative superiority over women in matrimonial affairs. When an Ahmadi girl marries a non-Ahmadi boy, there is a strong likelihood that the man will try to destroy the woman's religion. Regardless of whether he succeeds or not, there is a threat that should be guarded against for Ahmadi girls. Mostly children are under the influence of the father, which suggests that an Ahmadi girl may be given to a non-Ahmadi boy to produce non-Ahmadi off-springs. Because of these reasons, it was instructed that only non-Ahmadi girls' proposals may be accepted if needed, but no Ahmadi girl would be wedded to a non-Ahmadi boy, and Ahmadies should be married only to Ahmadies.

(Silsila Ahmadiyya, page 85)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II[ra] has described the wisdom of prohibition of marriage to non-Ahamdies in the following manner:

"Once, a non-Ahmadi asked Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as], why he did not allow his Jama'at members to establish matrimonial and other relationships with them. He said, a few drops of sour yogurt could spoil a pitcher full of milk. People do not understand that it is essential to keep the community away from other people in order to conserve the vigor of the community and save them from their bad influences. As we have to fight a spiritual war with our enemies, if we get close to the people who are

subdued by Europe and imitate them, then next we will start copying Europe and abandon the Qur'anic war. Therefore for the benefit of Islam and Muslims we should not get close to the other communities, so we do not neglect our responsibilities of spreading the message of Islam. For the benefit of Islam and Muslims we should not get close to other communities, otherwise we will become neglectful of our responsibilities of spreading the message of Islam. There is already a scarcity of soldiers in Islam, if the few solders that are available also become lazy then there is no hope of a fight with the enemies.

(Tafseer-e-Kabeer, volume 8th, page: 522, 523)

At the occasion of a *Majlis-e-Shura,* Hadhrat Musleh Mau'oodra said about accepting the proposal of non-Ahmadi girls:

"The permission to accept the proposal of a non-Ahmadi girl is actually a challenge for our intelligence and wisdom; it is necessary to see if it is beneficial or not. I think under the current circumstances it is necessary to keep this restriction. Actually the permission granted by *Shariah* is useful when availed according to the circumstances. When a new community is formed, it has a greater tendency to go back to the community it came from, therefore it is critical to stop it right there. Our situation is that for one Ahmadi in a family, there are 10 non-Ahmadies. If we allow everyone to take advantage of this permission, it is likely that all relatives would make this one person go back to them. Many friends have written cases to me where a non-Ahmadi girl became Ahmadi after marrying into an Ahmadi family. But the issue is that the loss incurred when an Ahmadi becomes a non-Ahmadi is greater than the benefit of a non-Ahmadi girl becoming Ahmadi. For example, assume there are 100 marriages with non-Ahmadies and 20 Ahmadi boys become non-Ahmadi and 80 non-Ahmadi girls become Ahmadi. Losing 20 Ahmadi boys is a bigger loss compared to the benefit of getting 80 non-Ahmadi girls. It is not lawful to lose a small portion of what Allah has given us for the sake of gaining more. It is our responsibility to protect the faith of the people given to us by Allah."

(Report Majlis-e-Mushawarat, 1941, pages, 29 to 42, published in the 'Jama'at Ahmadiyya Ka Mushawarati Nizam, pages 382, 383)

Some mistakes in the choice of wife and husband

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'oodra pointing out the mistakes in the choice of wife and husband said, "As serious mistakes are made in the choice of a wife, similarly mistakes are made in the choice of a husband. Sometimes a pious and righteous wife is annihilated in the hands of an evil husband. One Ahmadi girl was married to a non-Ahmadi boy, now she writes me letters that her husband hates religion so much that if he sees her reciting the Holy Qur'an, he throws away the Holy Qur'an in rage.

(Khutbat-e-Mahmood, volume III, page 70)

He further said, "Worse than this is the condition of the righteous women who are married to bad men. If these righteous women were married to righteous men, God's law of survival of progeny would have faired well and men would have fulfilled their immense responsibility to the best of their abilities. But people show hastiness in this matter, their real desire is the physical beauty and fulfillment of the base human desires therefore they stumble and die an unfortunate death."

(Khutbat-e-Mahmood, volume III, page 70)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh says in reference to the detriments of marrying with non-Ahamdies, "Some girls create a big problem for their parents by marrying non-Ahmadi boys, their parents are excommunicated from the Jama'at. Mostly, these girls return back crying to their houses, there are very few successful marriages like this. Successful here means dismayed in this life and the hereafter. In case of unsuccessful marriages, the girls who come back crying to their

houses at least get their religious destiny secured."

(Khutba Juma, Dec 15th, 2000)

Similarly Hazoor Anwar[rh] anwering a question in the *Majlis-e-Irfan* of Oct 10th, 1983 at Colombo on the subject of marriages of Ahmadi boys to non-Ahmadi girls said, "When Ahmadi boys bring girls from outside, certainly some Ahmadi girls would be left without husbands, therefore this is a very unjust act. *Nizam-e-Jama'at* also does not allow any Ahmadi boy to marry a non-Ahmadi girl without permission. If anyone commits such an act, I will expel him from the Jama'at as he has committed an injustice and is an oppressor of our girls. He goes out on his own will and destroys our next generations. Non-Ahmadi women first start spoiling their husband's religion and then they spoil their children also. Therefore, the marrying of an Ahmadi boy to a non-Ahmadi girl is like committing suicide in everyway."

(Reference, Log Kiya Kahain Gay, published by Lajna Ima'Ullah, Bharat, page 43)

Now listen to the discourse of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba]. Hazoor[aba] says, "The Ahmadiyya Jama'at will definitely consider that the person married to or desired to be married to an Ahmadi girl is an Ahmadi or not., as the ultimate purpose is the creation of a pure society, establishing of good deeds, and getting pious children. If Ahmadi boys leave Ahmadi girls behind and Ahmadi girls leave Ahmadi boys behind and marry non-Ahmadies, this could lead to disorder in the families. This could also turn away our next generations from religion. Therefore looking at the *kufuv* of religion is as important as *kufuv* of the world. Some of our boys and girls are extremely attracted to marrying outside the Jama'at, therefore there is a great need to look into it, especially in this free society. The *Nizam* is also worrying more about it as the instances of people marrying outside, and in other religions have significantly increased."

(Daily Alfazal, Rabwah, April 12th, 2005, page 4)

Similarly Hazoor[aba] said, "In this age, Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] tried to act upon the instructions of the Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] with great pain. He specially tried and strived to get Ahmadi boys and girls to marry in the Jama'at so our next generations remain steadfast on religion. He greatly emphasized to marry in the Jama'at. This is especially for those who marry outside.

(Daily Alfazal, Rabwah, April 12th, 2005, page 5)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] addressing the ladies at the time of Jalsa Salana UK once again emphasized upon Ahmadi boys and girls to marry in the Jama'at and said, "Sometimes Satan uses various tricks in the name of open-mindedness. The free intermixing of boys and girls without any restriction leads to such acts that are troublesome for the individuals and bring disrepute to the family for ever. Islam definitely does not allow it, therefore Ahmadi women and girls should abstain from them and always act on the Islamic teachings.

Sometimes Ahmadi boys marry non-Ahmadi girls and argue that it is permissible to marry with people of the book. But they forget those verses of the Holy Qur'an where people of the book are included with non-believers. They marry into non-Muslims and a few years later they realize their mistake. When they see its bad effects on themselves and their children then they are ashamed of their open-mindedness, which is actually close-mindedness, but by then already a lot of loss has been incurred.

Similarly some girls with independent and unrestricted ways marry non-Ahmadies or non-Muslims, though the boy accepts Ahmadiyyat but still they along with their families face many predicaments and issues. In the beginning some parents do not pay much attention to it, but as a result their children start moving away from the Jama'at. Parents, out of embarrassment reduce their visits to the Jama'at and slowly move far away from the Jama'at. At

that point they realize their mistake. Therefore all Ahmadi girls should pay attention to the Islamic teachings. All parents at the time of settling matches should consider the Islamic teachings of not having a high regard for tribe, wealth, respect, and status, and only consider piety, *taqwa* and religious inclination. If the matches are made by considering piety and *taqwa*, Allah's blessings would be with us and our next generations would stay on the path of piety."

(Alfazal International, August 18th – 24st, 2006)

Importance of prayers in the choice of matches

In our society, parents raise the kids and when they are adults, the next step is to settle them in their homes. In this regard one of the most important point is prayers right from the start, that should never be forgotten. In addition to other matters, regular prayers for getting a pious and righteous spouse should be started right after the birth of children and prayers for their success and well-being should be continued after their marriages.

The issue of spouses is an important issue and the choice of a spouse is a difficult matter. Man's knowledge is very limited and imperfect. Sometimes a person lives with another person for years, still he could not accurately assess his character and habits. Our lord, Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] has shown us a simple way to resolve this issue; that is through prayers. It is only the Being of Allah *Ta'ala* that has perfect knowledge about every being, and there is nothing hidden from Him in the heavens or the earth, and that Pure Being knows better which matches are more suitable and better for each other. Besides this, if we have made the wrong choice of a spouse, the Being of Allah *Ta'ala* is the only such Being that has the power to provide such means from His pure Grace which could be helpful and beneficial in leading to the ultimate goal. Therefore the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] has instructed us to offer *Istikhara* prayers. That is to pray with heartfelt pain to Allah *Ta'ala* so that He through His knowledge of the unseen and grace guide us towards the way that leads to the blessings of both the worlds and has blessings of every kind associated with it.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau-'ood[ra] emphasizing the importance of *Nikah* and prayers in this regard said,

"Common people are unaware of the importance of *Nikah*. *Nikah* is a building which has a grand world living inside it. An entire world comes into being from the progeny of one person. Therefore this is not an insignificant matter, rather it has great significance. Therefore there is a great need for apprehension, fear of God, and prayers. For the same reason, for this occasion Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] chose the verses of the Holy Quran that again and again instruct about *taqwa*. Happiness is such a thing which is pretty in itself, but there are very few people who remember God in happiness, though God is often remembered at the time of sorrow. Marriage is also an occasion of happiness, the whole world celebrates it except a small island. Therefore the Holy Qur'an emphasized on *taqwa* and repeatedly called our attention to have trust in God and pray to Him for good results, and for God's consent in this matter."

(Khutbat-e-Mehmood, volume 3, page 48)

Hadhrat Khalifatul IVrh said, "We should begin everything with prayers, and especially offer prayers and *Istikhara* in matrimonial affairs. But some people unaware of the real meanings of *Istikhara* get into superstition as they do not understand the true meanings of dreams. They need to contemplate on these matters. They should make earnest prayers with their full heart in this matter and accept the match only if they feel satisfied at heart and should have full trust in Allah. Islam has taught us to get guidance from Allah through *Istikhara* prayers with all its traditions and conditions."

Listen to one more sayings of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh, "Whether under

consideration is a match for your boy, girl or some other relative, it is the responsibility of the parents under all circumstances to start the match process with very humble prayers. Prayers are of vital importance in the case of matches, and they have far reaching effects on the children."

(Alfazal, 20th August, 2002)

It is a must for every aspirer (girl or boy) of a match to offer *Istikhara* prayers to ask guidance from Allah. Sometimes prayer is not given its due importance and either the parents pray or someone else in the family is asked to pray, but the boy or the girl to be married is completely neglected. If the boy or the girl is asked to pray and the match is fixed only after their hearts feel satisfied, then if issues arise afterwards, the thought that Allah chose their spouses and they should ignore petty matters and be thankful to Allah would give them some satisfaction.

These days the media revolution is knocking at our doors. The European way of unrestricted meetings is greatly publicized in the name of *Kennenlernen* (getting to know) in order to assess the suitability of intellects and thoughts, though European nations are facing its bad consequences as well. Our beloved lord, Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] made his community be aware of the great issue of *Dajjal* for good reasons. He said the issue of *Dajjal* would be the biggest issue from the creation of mankind till the day of judgment. So the way the issue of *Dajjal* is raising its head requires no explanation. This issue is also spreading itself under the pretext of western culture. It should be remembered that today we are ambassadors of Islam, we are the ones who have to protect Islamic values. As far as Islamic boundaries are concerned, they have been discussed, we should always remain within those boundaries. The path on the other side of this boundary leads to the valley of sin and also destroys the peace and tranquility of the society. Remember, we should never be affected by the poisonous effects and lies of the media. We have to defend Islamic values with great courage, valor and heroism and fight against the filthy propaganda of the media. We are by no means against the West, but we are against that culture that has destroyed the peace and tranquility of the society and is also attacking the Islamic way of life. We have to defend and protect the Islamic values, and make the West aware of the benefits of the beautiful teachings of Islam and bring them close to it in order to save them from the great losses being incurred by them.

Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] said regarding the issue of *Dajjal* that some people from Persia would stand up and face all kinds of troubles and threats and re-establish faith in the world.

(Bukhari, Kitabul Tafseer, Surah Al-Jumma)

Hadhrat Muhammad's[saw] prophecy regarding the bringing back of faith from the heights of peliades has already been fulfilled in the person of the Promised Messiah[as]. Even now a group from the sons of Persia is working hard day and night to revive the religion and establish *Shariah*. It is our good fate that Allah gave us the opportunity to recognize the Imam of the time and established the system of Khilafat. Now it is our duty to listen to the voice of the Khalifa of the time and act upon his instructions because listening to him and acting upon his advice leads to goods in this world and the next. The call of Khalifa is the call of the time. These godly people advise according to the needs of the time and provide guidance after looking at the signs of God's decree. We should act upon these instructions because the secret of our well-being, success, and survival is in sticking to the rope of Allah and staying attached to the *Nizam*.

(Published in Al-Fazal International, Nov 24th to Nov 30th, 2006)

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ALC 2007 Report

Munawar Saqib, Qa'id Umumi

The seventh annual Ansar Leadership Conference (ALC 2007) was held at Baitul Ikram Mosque, Allen, TX on January 13 and 14, 2007. It was held in four separate sessions; three on Saturday and one on Sunday. The conference was attended by:

- National Ansar Aamila: 18 (out of 21)
- Nazimeen: 9 (out of 10)
- Zo'ama or their representative: 35 (out of 59)
- Missionary 1
- Invited guest speakers 3
- Observers: 14

Total Attendance: 80

The conference commenced with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an by Dr. Chairul Bahri. Ansar pledge was led by Dr. Wajeeh Bajwa, Sadr Majlis Ansarullah, USA. This was followed by the introduction of the participants. Sadr Sahib began by introducing himself, and then requested all participants to stand up one by one and provide a brief introduction (name, employment, Jama'at/Auxiliaries' Offices, family information etc.).

In *Talqeen-e-Amal* (exhortation to work), Imam Muhammad Zafrullah Hanjra Sahib addressed the audience on

- Remembrance of Allah,
- Obedience to *Nizam-e-jama'at,*
- Getting rid of ego for the sake of Allah,
- Learning Urdu,
- Adhering to good cultural values, and
- Refraining from bad customs (such as mixed parties).

In his opening comments, Sadr Sahib mentioned that the purpose of ALC is to provide a forum to discuss and understand our challenges, and to find means to implement the instructions of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih[aba]. He advised the Ansar to inculcate the following in themselves and their membership:

- The love of Allah.
- The spirit to promote and propagate the teachings of Islam.
- The urge to preach Islam and serve mankind.
- The spiritual and moral training of children.
- The spirit of protecting the institution of Khilafat.
- The spirit of placing collective interests above individual interests.

Sadr Sahib explained the relationship of the auxiliaries with the Jama'at and reminded *Zo'ama* to fully support Jama'at functions and take part in all Jama'at activities, along with implementing the program given in the Ansar handbook for 2007. He listed the following goals for 2007:

- Increase members' participation in meetings.
- Continue to promote *Nizam-e-Wasiyyat* (institution of the Will).
- Collection of funds ($500,000) for the Ansar Hall.
- Establish *Ta'limul* (teaching of) Qur'an class in each majlis.
- Establish a *Salaat* (Prayer) center in each

house (*Majlis*).
- Hold at least one *Tabligh* event in each *Majlis*.
- Initiate annual Ansar walkathon in each region.
- Continue Tahir Scholarship program.
- Increase TJ/WJ participation/collection by at least 10%.
- Increase *Chanda* participation/collection by 10%.

Next, Sadr Sahib invited each Qa'id to present information related to their department.

Qa'id Tabligh (Propagation), Monas Chaudry, said that in order to be effective in Tabligh, we must:

- Be a shining example of faith before inviting others to join our faith.
- Pray and seek divine help for success in *Tabligh*.
- Listen to Hazoor's sermons regularly, and
- Follow the 2006 Shura recommendations on *Tabligh* in small towns.

Qa'id Mal (Finance), Kalim Ahmad Rana, explained that financial sacrifice is the hallmark of our history. He gave many examples of financial sacrifices at various times. He reminded *Zo'ama* to collect *Chanda* regularly and send monthly financial reports. He urged *Zo'ama* to improve participation of members and collect at least 10% above the income level of 2006.

Qa'id Ta'lim (Education), Muhammad Dawood Munir, discussed the *Ta'lim* syllabus for 2007. He explained that this year's plans include:

- Learn translation and commentary of *Surah Al-Baqarah* (Ch.2), Verses 105-197.
- Study of *Ahadith* from "Gardens of The Righteous" the English translation of *Riyadh as-Salihin*.
- Memorize the first five *Ahadith* from "Words of Wisdom," study them at home, discuss them in meetings, and incorporate into daily lifestyle.
- Study the following books by Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah & Mahdi[as]:

a)Lecture *Ludhiana*,
b)The Heavenly Decree (Urdu: *Asmani Faisala*).

He also announced the following topics for essay writing competitions this year:

First competition:

- Moral Training of Ahmadi youth in today's society
- Islamic teachings on war and peace

Second competition:

- Institution of Khilafat

Qa'id Ta'limul Qur'an (Study of the Holy Qur'an), Asim Ansari was out of country to perform Hajj. The proposed plan for this department was, therefore, presented by Muhammad Dawood Munir. He explained that the objective of this *Qiadat* is to inculcate love of studying the Holy Qur'an. Every majlis must arrange regular classes focusing on:

- The Recitation of the Holy Qur'an (*Nazira* i. e., reading Arabic text)
- Its translation, and
- Memorization of first 17 verses of Al-Baqarah and last ten chapters of the Holy Qur'an.

Qa'id Tarbiyat (Moral Training), Rafiuddin Malik, described plans for the *Tarbiyyat* department to achieve following objectives:

- Increase observance of Prayer (*Salaat*)
- Inculcate habit of prayer

(*dua*)
- Regular recitation of Qur'an and reading commentary
- Create and maintain *Salaat* centers
- Hold an annual *Tarbiyyat* week
- Contact all members regularly
- Conduct regular interactive group discussions
- Improve *Tarbiyyat* of household members
- Maintain a strong affiliation with Khalifatul Masih(aba) and the Jama'at
- Increase participation in *Nizam-e-Wasiyyat* (Institution of the Will)
- Learn Urdu
- Address social and cultural issues

Qa'id Tarbiyat Nau Mubai'in (Training of New Converts), Rafi Ahmed, went over details of his plan to inculcate following habits among new converts:

- Offer prayer (salaat) regularly.
- Seek Allah's help through prayer (dua).
- Recite Holy Qur'an and read its commentary.
- To develop strong affiliation with Khalifatul Masih(aba) and the Majlis (Jama'at).

Qa'id Tehrik-e-Jadid, Dr. Chairul Bahri quoted Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II(ra): "Every person who participates in the *`Tahrik-i-Jadid'* helps to foster the system of *`Al-Wasiyyat'* and every person who does this, helps in the establishment of the New World Order." He then went over previous year's collection and said that this year's targets include:

- Increase participation level to 80%.
- Increase per capita contribution from $430 to $460, and
- Increase total contributions by ansar to $600,000.

Qa'id Waqf-e-Jadid, Abdullah Ennin also quoted Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II(ra): "If our Jama'at wishes to prosper it will have to extend its preaching activity in every quarter." He then went over the strategy to increase participation this year by 20% (to 70%), and aim to collect at least $500,000.

Qa'id Isha'at (Publication), Syed Sajid Ahmad, presented highlights of last year, including the number of books and pamphlets published. He mentioned that he will continue to manage the quarterly magazine, *Al-Nahl,* and that the monthly Newsletter is being published by Rafiuddin Malik. Chaudhry Mushtaq Ahmad will be responsible for the distribution and management of literature. He also outlined the plan for the this year and provided titles of books and pamphlets that will be published during 2007.

Qa'id Zahanat & Sehat Jismani (Intellect & Physical Health), Dr. Bashiruddin K. Ahmad, urged *Zo'ama* to make sure that members take care of their health. He pointed out that members should maintain proper body weight and have physical check-ups every year. On the subject of *Zahanat* (Intellect) he advised Ansar to memorize Holy Qur'an, *Qaseeda* and other recommended prayers. He also urged members to read Jama'at publications regularly.

Qa'id Ithar (Social Services), Yahya Nasheed Muhammad, reported that Qiadat Ithar has funds to help Ansar purchase MTA systems if needed. He mentioned that this year the focus of *Ithar* will be to serve the community in general and the youth in particular. He emphasized the importance of *Ithar* activities and urged members to improve relations with communities

in which they live.

Qa'id Tajnid (Census), Munawar Malik said that an accurate *Tajnid* is essential for any organization to work efficiently. It is, therefore, imperative that *Tajnid* records are kept current. He requested *Zo'ama* to update the tajnid of their *Majlis* as soon as the need arises and promptly report all changes to him.

Auditor, Muhammed Owusu, presented the audit plan and how an audit is conducted. He emphasized that our financial system is based on *taqwa* (righteousness), and that the main purpose of the audit is to train *Zo'ama* and *Muntizameen Mal* about the financial system and proper book keeping.

Qa'id Umumi (General Secretary), Munawar Saqib, went over the contents of Ansar Handbook and how to use it. He explained changes made to the monthly report forms that were revised to simplify reporting, and to capture only useful information. He went over the responsibilities of *Muntazim Umumi* and announced that a new e-mail distribution list had been set up so that all Ansar could receive summaries of Hazoor's sermons automatically.

A notable feature of this ALC were the three invited guest speakers. The first guest, Mubarik Malik (**National Secretary Finance**) spoke about the importance of financial sacrifices quoting the Promised Messiah[as] and addresses of Khulafa. He mentioned that *Zo'ama* should ascertain *Chanda* status of members before elections are held.

Special guest, **Rasheed Ahmad (*Waaqifay Zindagi* - Devotee),** delivered one of the most captivating speeches. He spoke of fond memories of his relationship with Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II[ra], and used anecdotes from his own life to explain how to initiate and conduct effective *Tabligh*. He described how to begin preaching even in the most awkward circumstances, for example, he advised the host *Majlis* of this conference to send letters to all houses in the vicinity of the mosque, stating that a conference was just held and to find out if they were inconvenienced in any way.

Na'ib Sadr I, Dr. Khaled Ata, urged all members to pay special attention to *Nizame-e-Wasiyyat*. He explained the importance of the Wasiyyat, quoting the Promised Messiah[as] and addresses of Khulafa.

Day 2: The meeting on Sunday (January 14, 2007) started at 9:00 AM with recitation by Mohammad Shabooti. Munawar Saqib, Qa'id Umumi, answered *Zo'ama's* questions and explained the process by which *Majalis* are evaluated for *Alam-e Inami*. Sadr Sahib spoke about the possible dates and theme, *Khilafat*, for regional and national Ansar Ijtema'at.

Na'ib Ameer, Munum Naeem, delivered a speech on the subject of "Obedience to Khilafat."

Regional Missionary, Imam Muhammad Zafrullah Hanjra Sahib and local Jama'at president, Akram Chaudhry gave brief comments about the success of this conference.

In his concluding remarks, Sadr Majlis Ansarullah, Dr. Wajeeh Bajwa, urged *Zo'ama* to implement each and every department's program that is given in the hand book. He requested *Zo'ama* and *Nazimeen* to abide by the rules and regulations of the *Majlis* and ensure that funds are used only for

genuine needs of the *Majlis*. He emphasized that *Zo'ama* should be diligent in sending their reports. He mentioned that *Zo'ama* should hold elections for *Shura* delegates on time and must submit reports of election in time. This year it is even more important because the delegates of the *Shura* will participate in the election of Sadr and Na'ib Sadr for the next two years.

He also reminded *Zo'ama* that meetings must be well organized and a meeting agenda should be distributed ahead of time. We should try to reach out to each and every member of our *Majlis*, pray for them, and try to understand their difficulties. He thanked the host *Majlis*, Dallas, for making excellent arrangements for the attendees.

The conference concluded with the Ansar pledge, and *dua*, led by Sadr Sahib.

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THE HOLY QUR'AN

Hadhrat Ibn 'Abbas[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "He in whose heart there is nothing of the Qur'an is like a house in ruin."

MAQBARATUS SALAM BALTIMORE, MD

It is for the information of those Ahmadi brothers/sisters who have purchased grave site(s) in *Maqbaratus Salam* Baltimore, MD, that a price of $675.00 plus $10.00 (processing fee) has been locked for Opening/Closing of each grave site till October 2007. It can be paid directly to "Lake View Memorial Park" by contacting Mr. Daniel at his cell: 443-340-6860 or office: 410-795-8180 by giving your grave site number. Please note that these charges do not include the Funeral Home/Casket/ Cement Liner or Vault/Coffin and Headstone costs. For general information, the present average above costs are about $6,000.00.

Those members who have not purchased the grave sites, they should do so as early as possible, as we still have some sites left and each grave site costs $500 as compared to about $1,500 to $2,000 in the metro area. Please contact me if you have forgotten your grave site number or if you want to purchase one or more sites for your family.

Munir Ahmad Khan
In charge Maqbaratus Salam
8428 Mountain Laurel Lane
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
301-977-3221 (H)
240-888-2850 (C)

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Whose Will, My Will, I Will, The Will

Ahmed Iqbal Khan

Baltimore, MD

The words of the will pour like rain water through my ears and my eyes,
Washing out the corroded with total absolution, perfusion into the transcendental phase,
Wise, my ears and my eyes, eradicating the corruption, turning words into gold,
Having unfold, before the gentle eyes who cannot see, let me tell you who you can be, Feel the power of the Messiah, who could of thought, his thought, my thought,
That I brought upon the lavish stature of my own soul, cut asunder from this world,
Taken by surprise by a beautiful poet who dazzled the world around
Into this corner my own heart, the Promised Messiah[as],
Bringer of the old and the unchanged, the values of the Holy Qur'an which foretold
Of the will, whose will, my will, I will, bring about this change unto myself
and thyself and thee but most importantly me

Who could have masterminded this ingenuity, reaping the good hearts of the pure
And the innocence, feeling the minds of the lesser geniuses
And destroying their egotistical pride, surmounting his innocence against the *Dajjal*, Facing danger from the foul, the low lives and the happy go lucky proletariats,
Mobs of the unseen or Jinn as a simple characterization by the Holy Qur'an,
In a rapid succession of turn of events we see the Messiah, the Promised Messiah[as]
Bringer of the old and the unchanged, the values of the Holy Qur'an which foretold
Of the will, whose will, my will, I will, bring about this change unto myself
and thyself and thee but most importantly me

Take one tenth my life, explained by the humble and saintly teacher,
To declare in his ten conditions of *Bai'at* as we should conform to by the very phrase Propagation of Ahmadiyyat, take one tenth of my life, for it is not my life but a gift Bestowed upon this truest of any true heart, who only seeks nearness to his Creator,
To feel the ***Wadud,*** His absolute love and kinship, the original actuator portraying
The restive hearts to feel again, feel for who, the orphans, the poor, the hungry,
The decimated, the unappreciated, the forgotten, the ravaged, the pillaged, the unloved, The incomprehensible and jaded, but at the apex of this list of aching hearts who cry
With no tears, for the need of everything that is good and should, the brothers and sisters
Who we feel for and punctuate our time for and at the hem of our towers
Of righteousness, so sure, take one tenth of my life, the Promised Messiah [as]
Bringer of the old and the unchanged, the values of the Holy Qur'an which foretold
Of the will, whose will, my will, I will, bring about this change unto myself
and thyself and thee but most importantly me

Death is not the end, who said, who could fend, I can attend to this fact and many more
Like me, it is a beginning an imminent return to your fabricator, to your cause and effect
The one who moved the first domino piece and released the energy stored inside
The immense gravitational pull of the dark abyss, unless, I see how things are,
So all this seems very far, death is going to be our life's reflection of what we did,
Who we are made up of, facing the reality of our own tortured faith and solidarity,
Remarked by the great poet Coleridge, water water every where, nor a drop to drink,
But I say drink from this fountain called the will, so I shall not conceit a defeat,
For in this life, for my wife, my children, my parents, my grandparents,
Live by the example called sacrifice and what is the example, an example is
Hadhart Muhammad[saw] and his forthcoming Messiah, the Promised Messiah[as]
Bringer of the old and the unchanged, the values of the Holy Quran which foretold
Of the will, whose will, my will, I will, bring about this change unto myself
and thyself and thee but most importantly me

So, I hear this call of the ***Wassiyyat***, this magical incantation from my beloved Khalifa, ***Wassiyyat*** is the ***Taqwa*** and the ***Taqwa*** is the ***Wassiyyat***, you knew, who knew, we knew,
I knew this pain of my Khalifa to acknowledge the fact that we all need to soul search,
To learn from our weaknesses, so here we are with all the gives and takes,
Before the loving God, who makes, before us a brilliant challenge,
The challenge is the Promised Messiah[as]
Bringer of the old and the unchanged, the values of the Holy Qur'an which foretold
Of the will, whose will, my will, I will, bring about this change unto myself
and thyself and thee but most importantly me!

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Denial Amounts to Disobedience of the Holy Prophet[saw]

As I am the Promised Messiah and God has openly manifested heavenly signs in my support, everyone who in, the estimation of God, has been sufficiently warned regarding my advent as the Promised Messiah and has become aware of my claim will be accountable to God, for no one can turn away with impunity from those who have been sent by Him. This sin is not against me but against the Holy Prophet[saw] for whose support I have been sent. He who does not accept me, disobeys not me but him[saw] who had prophesied my coming. I hold the same belief with regard to believing in the Holy Prophet[saw] as well. He who has heard the call of the Holy Prophet[saw] and has been made aware of his advent and who, in the estimation of God, has been sufficiently apprised of his Prophethood, if such a one dies a disbeliever he would be condemned to eternal perdition.

[Haqiqatul Wahi, Roohani Khaza'in, vol.22, pp. 184-185]

MEANS OF SELF-PURIFICATION

Yusef Latif

The only means of self-purification that I am able to envision at this time is to pray to Allah that He doesn't place a seal on my heart, my ears or my eyes. I also pray that He keeps my heart disease-free and that He helps my tongue to speak only truth.

I pray that my heart doesn't become hardened like a stone and that He joins peace upon my heart, and that He guides me upon the path of peace. I pray that He humbles my heart and keeps me consistently humble for fear of Him, so that I shall be consistently mindful of my thoughts and actions.

I pray that Allah helps me to avoid the contamination of disbelief. I pray that I hold firmly to what Allah has given to me and that I obey His commandments and that my heart becomes permeated with the love of Allah and His creation.

I pray that I become a friend to Gabriel by the command of Allah and may this friendship serve, by the Grace of Allah, as a means of self-purification.

I beg that Allah's signs become plain for me and may I not be among those who are contentious quarrellers. May my heart earn the good things of life, and may I be given the God given strength to avoid sin and that which is vain. May my heart be given tranquility from my Lord and may my life contain a legacy of good.

I plead to God that He show to me the means of purification, so that my heart may be at rest. May Allah, out of His Grace, free my heart of perversity, so that I seek not discord and the wrong interpretation of the Book.

Self-purification involves holding fast, all together with those who hold to the rope of Allah, and that I not be divided from those whose hearts have been united in Love by Allah. Self-purification requires that I don't deviate from the path of righteousness and take to a life of sin. Self-purification requires that I love all of humanity and that I believe in all of the Book.

Of course, ultimately help towards self purification comes from Allah alone, the Mighty, the Wise. And of course kindness towards all of humanity is one of the means of self-purification and the moral quality of kindness is a mercy from Allah.

May I continue to submit to Allah with full submission, and may He free me of aggression against anyone. May I not say with my mouth what my heart believes not. May Allah be pleased to purify my heart, and may I strive to obey all of God's messengers, and to act upon the truths that they convey from God. May veils never cover my heart, may I always be allowed to understand. May Allah allow me to hear, see, and understand the truth.

May I grow humble before punishment comes

upon me, and may I know that Satans promptings are unfair. Please Allah help me to avoid transgression so that I wont wander in distraction. O Allah please accept my prayer, purify me so that my vision becomes clear, enable me to avoid the contaminated path—— this is my prayer.

Please expand my bosom for the complete acceptance of Islam. I can't achieve self-purification without Allah's guidance, for He is the Bestower and the All Knowing.

I am grateful that Allah has created me with a heart, and with my heart I try to understand therewith. He has given me eyes, for which I am grateful, and I try to see the truth therewith. He has, also, given me ears, for which I am grateful, and with which I try to hear the truth. Consequently, by directing all of the senses that Al-Mighty God has given to me, in a heedful manner I hope to acquire self purification, *Insha Allah.* In essence, the only means I have of acquiring self-purification is by the correct application of the faculties that Allah has so graciously given to me.

I strive that my heart may tremble when the name of Allah is mentioned, and I deeply desire that my faith is increased when His signs are recited to me, for I believe this is part of the means of obtaining self-purification.

As Allah sends down water from the clouds as a means of replenishing the earth, so can He purify mankind and remove the filth of Satan, and strengthen the hearts and make our steps firm, providing we engage our God given faculties in His cause.

The means of self-purification entails responding to Allah and the Messenger when he calls us that we may be shown the way to purify our lives and to know that Allah is Mighty, Wise. In fact, Allah's intervention is needed for man has no control over his ego, in that, there are times when man cannot make his heart obey his dictates. That is why the Holy Qur'an says:

"...know that Allah comes in between a man and his heart.... "(8:25). Therefore in all instances of endeavor we must depend on Allah.

And help comes from Allah alone, the Mighty, the Wise." (3:127).

Self-purification, also means, having affection between the hearts, which is something no human being can do, but Allah can, for the Holy Qur'an says"

"...Allah has put affection between them, Surely, He is Mighty, Wise. (8:64).

Mankind's job is to have good in their hearts because:

"If Allah knows any good in your hearts, He will give you better than that which has been taken from you, and will forgive you. And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful. (8:71). Therefore having good in ones heart is a means toward self purification. It logically follows that where there is concern for good in the heart doubt doesn't exist. The pure heart is a tender heart for:

"Abraham was most tender-hearted, forbearing." (9:114).

Mankind must turn to Allah for purification for He has said:

"O mankind! there has indeed come to you an exhortation from your Lord and a cure for whatever

disease there is in the hearts, and a guidance and a mercy to the believers. (10:58).

Therefore mankind must pray to Allah for purification in that:

The Lord is nigh, and answers prayers." (11:62).

The blessings of a pure heart comes from Allah alone for He has said:

"And all of the tidings of the Messenger whereby We make thy heart firm, We relate unto thee, and herein has come to thee the truth and an exhortation and a reminder for believers." (11:121).

Another element essential to the means of self purification comes through believing and remembering Allah, for He has said:

"Those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah. Aye! it is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort." (13:29).

Self purification, also, depends on one believing in the Hereafter for:

"Your God is One God. And as to those who believe not in the Hereafter their hearts are strangers to truth. and they are full of pride." (16:23).

Self purification demands keeping ones—self attached to those who call on their Lord, morning and evening, seeking His pleasure:

"...And let not thy eyes pass beyond them, seeking the adornment of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his evil inclinations, and his case exceeds all bounds." (18:29).

So the means of purification of the self requires that we pray that Allah blesses us with tenderness of heart, purity and piousness, the qualities with which He blessed Yahya[as].

So in seeking the means of self purification one should remember:

"Those who believe and do good deeds—-the Gracious God will create deep love in their hearts." (19:97). The meaning of this verse has such depth and vastness that it makes the hearts of believers expand and overflow with Divine knowledge and love.

Such is the guidance of Allah; He guides therewith whom He pleases. And he whom Allah adjudges astray—he shall have no guide." (39:24).

Nevertheless, the means of obtaining self purification requires avoiding disputation concerning the signs of Allah, without any authority, avoiding arrogance and haughtiness, avoiding treachery of the eyes and the heart.

"Grievously hateful is this in the sight of Allah and in the sight of those who believe. Thus does Allah seal up the heart of every arrogant, haughty person." (40:36).

Finally I pray that the totality of mankind's ears, eyes and hearts be used in a manner whereby they will accept the Signs of Allah, and in so doing become free from anything that contaminates or adulterates. *Ameen.*

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HELP HUMANITY FIRST

ISLAMIC DRESS CODE AND THE WEST

Maham Saleem

The Islamic dress code is greatly misinterpreted in the West, the females who practice proper *Purdah* know that they are at times shown a cold shoulder while in the grocery store or at the University. We are judged before people get to know us. This is an issue in America and Europe, and I feel we need to address it by simply calling a spade a spade.

It has been 4 years since I have been residing in the United States and I can quote two incidents when I have been called a "terrorist". One was when we stopped to shop at a 7-11 in Marlboro, Maryland and the second time was in Jackson Heights, New York. I was not acting suspicious or anything; I was simply wearing my head covering and a coat. In my article I would like to first describe the Western prejudice towards Islamic dress code and then give proof that the Islamic dress code is not new to Islam, but in fact it has been a Judeo-Christian practice. It is my humble effort to convey the problem to our authorities and to create more confidence in girls to practice their religious right of *Purdah.*

The Islamic dress code controversy

The British right-wing tabloid *Daily Express* campaigned for a ban on veils in 2006, with a picture of a veiled woman and bold letters BAN IT! On the front cover. There are proposals for a legal ban on the veil, *niqab*, *burqa*, and *chador* in Europe, with the French leading the race closely followed by the Netherlands. "For some critics, Islamic dress is an issue of value conflicts and the Clash of Civilizations. The westerners think, the *burqa* or *chador* are both a symbol of religious obscurantism and of the oppression of women" (Wikipedia Encyclopedia). Where as we, the Muslims believe that the *Purdah* is a way to safeguard the women so they can freely work, study, and shop with men and women alike without feeling intimidated.

Tony Blair has said the wearing of full-face veils by Muslim women is a "mark of separation" and make some "outside the community feel uncomfortable"(BBC News). I think we should take it up as our duty to eliminate this uncomfortable feeling in the Westerners, through a series of Inter-Faiths on the Islamic dress code. We can invite the local journalists to do a piece on it; it will surely convey our message and our side of the story.

During a meeting between the CIA and Pakistanis on GEO TV, one of the people presiding over the conference raised a valid point. He said that the Japanese faced difficulties before they were accepted into mainstream America, so did the Chinese. It is our time to assimilate, yet uphold our beliefs and get accepted the way we are. The Japanese were tried and suspected after Pearl Harbor; the Chinese were seen

as a Communist threat and the Muslims after the unfortunate incident of 9/11 are judged as terrorists or fundamentalists. We can bridge the gap through writing in the newspapers and inviting people to interfaiths.

The veil is not new to Islam:

Mother Mary

Hadhrat Maryam is depicted wearing a veil and head-covering in paintings and sculptures. Even in the movie the Passion of the Christ, all the women are properly veiled and covered.

Nuns wear veils

It is a sign of modesty and is known as the veil of probation or the veil of profession. The European ladies in the old days were chaperoned by males when going away from home. When the females took up jobs as nurses or teachers, i.e. when they had to come out in the open unchaperoned they wore veils to safeguard themselves from the evils of society and keep a professional distance from men. Even at parties et cetera the females wore hats. I remember a particular line from the book "Gone with the Wind" when the main character takes off her hat in public at a tea party, and the rest of the females talk about it as a deviant act. So it is not new to Islam. The veil and modesty have been a part of Christianity and the Western culture.

Veils in Church Service

Observing the females who go to Church, I see that they wear a proper headdress. It is still a part of the Christian faith to veil and cover oneself when entering the house of the Lord. The Muslims believe that they are in the sight of God all the time, and therefore we keep covered for modesty and self guard. The Catholic and the Mormons particularly wear a headdress to Church.

Head cover in Judaism

Once a Jewish woman is married, she is supposed to keep her head covered. This is the act of restraining a female's beauty only for her husband. This is exactly what Muslim woman do with their veils and headscarves.

Veils and the Judeo-Christian Bride

A Christian woman always wears a veil on her wedding day if she follows the tradition of a 'white wedding'. The hairs are left flowing at the back to symbolize virginity and the veil as modesty.

Rabbi Aron Moss who teaches *Kabbalah*, Talmud and practical Judaism in Sydney, Australia explains that the Jewish bride wears a veil, as it is a holy moment in her life. In Judaism it is the belief that even Prophet Moses[as] spoke from behind a veil because the radiance from his face was too much for people to absorb (Exodus 34:29-35)

Veiling as widow

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the widow veils herself for sometime after the death of her husband.

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POSTCARD USA

Rabwah: a place for martyrs

Khalid Hasan

(Khalid Hasan is Daily Times' US-based correspondent. His e-mail is khasan2@cox.net)

The time has come to fight openly and frontally these ignorant and deluded men and their dangerous and utterly un-Islamic conduct and ideas. A country of 150 million essentially decent and tolerant people cannot be allowed to go over the abyss towards which it is being pushed

The British Parliamentary Human Rights Commission led by that old campaigner Lord Avebury, who has never failed to back and fight on behalf of the world's good causes, has just this week issued an indictment of Pakistan for its deplorable treatment of the Ahmadiyya community. After reading the report of the three-member delegation that went to Pakistan late last year for an on-spot investigation, no one can possibly take General Pervez Musharraf's claims of "enlightened moderation" too seriously. After all, what the report lists is happening under the General's nose though, I believe, not at his instance. But since he is Mr Pakistan, and plans to remain that till the cows come home, the responsibility for what the report lists in some detail is his and no one else's.

Last year Lord Avebury, who is the vice chair of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group (PHRG), organised a three-member mission to Pakistan which visited Rabwah, met government officials in Islamabad and recorded testimony. The ensuing report should make us feel ashamed of the direction in which a compliant or complicit, but certainly an uncaring government has allowed the country to go. Our image today is that of an intolerant society, where the radicals have a free run and where civilised people are afraid to speak up for fear of reprisals. Jihadist Islam has hijacked Jinnah's Pakistan. The time has, thus, come to fight openly and frontally these ignorant and deluded men and their dangerous and utterly un-Islamic conduct and ideas. A country of 150 million essentially decent and tolerant people cannot be allowed to go over the abyss towards which it is being pushed.

In a foreword Lord Avebury writes that PHRG has observed with concern the rising tide of intolerance and fanaticism in Pakistan, and its dire effects on the rights and freedoms of the Ahmadiyya community. He recalls that in the early days of independence, it was possible for talented Ahmadis like Sir Zafrulla Khan, Pakistan's first Foreign Minister, or Professor Abdus Salam, the Nobel Prizewinning physicist, to rise to the top of their professions. But today they face multiple threats to life and property, are effectively disfranchised and prevented from holding public gatherings, denied access to higher education and barred from entry to public employment except at the lowest levels. He recalls attending the launch of President Musharraf's human rights programme in Islamabad, and expressing satisfaction on hearing of his intention to mitigate the worst effects of the blasphemy law, but this "signal of reform was greeted by an outburst of hostile invective from the small but vociferous anti-Ahmadi lobby, and the concession was withdrawn." There has been no let-up since on the progressive tightening of the screws, or any mitigation in the flood of hate speech directed against the Ahmadis by fanatic groups.

The report notes that out of a total of 60 blasphemy FIRs recorded in 2005 against Ahmadis, 25 were in Rabwah alone, indicating that the misuse of the law is as severe in Rabwah as in the rest of the Pakistan. Evidence was seen by the mission that the Ministry of Interior

caused local police to issue proceedings against Ahmadis in Rabwah, as elsewhere, for action, including distribution of literature, propagation of their faith, and collection of funds. The principal newspaper published by the community was closed down. The community also suffers more severely in Rabwah because of the presence of a Khatme Nabuwwat mosque and a madrassa, which regularly incite hatred against the Ahmadis, leading to systematic intimidation and violence. The mullah who runs these two outfits, acknowledged to the three-member team that his followers chanted 'Death to the Ahmadis!', but pretended that the attack was on beliefs not persons.

Clearly, since Ahmadis are unable to vote — and are not even registered since that would mean that they deny their faith — they play no part in the local government of Rabwah, but neither are they to be found among local police or officials. The evidence shows that hardly anything is spent on public services in the town, though Ahmadis themselves club together to repair roads and drains. In Rabwah, as elsewhere, schools were nationalised by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. They were denationalised in 1996, but in Rabwah, although the Ahmadis bought the schools back, they remain in government ownership and in a derelict and dangerous state.

Lord Avebury writes, "This report makes clear the precariousness of life for Ahmadis in Rabwah, starved of opportunities for education and employment, menaced by the Khatme Nabuwwat and their rent-a crowd mobs bussed in from miles around, prevented from buying land in the town they developed. They are deprived of the right to manifest their religion in worship, observance, practice and teaching, as laid down in the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and they are constantly under threat of prosecution under the infamous blasphemy laws. This place is not a safe haven for Ahmadis fleeing persecution elsewhere in Pakistan; it is a ghetto, at the mercy of hostile sectarian forces whipped up by hate-filled mullahs and most of the Urdu media. The authors of this report expose the reality of a dead-end, to which even more victims should not be exiled."

To get an idea of the cooperation received from government, the report says, "Pakistan Ministry of the Interior rebuffed repeated requests for an interview. Requests were made in the weeks before travelling to Pakistan and whilst the mission were travelling." The report does not say this, but I know that had it not been for High Commissioner Maleeha Lodhi in London, no visas would have been issued to the three-member Group. The report notes that popular sentiment in Pakistan has become increasingly hostile to Ahmadis. A senior government adviser, who did not wish to be named, explained how the population of Pakistan has become sensitised to Ahmadis since a spate of anti-Ahmadi violence in 1953. The Group was told of the vernacular press as having become virulently anti-Ahmadi. State television contains broadcasts of anti-Ahmadi rhetoric, including phrases such as "Ahmadis deserve to die." Even in the traditionally liberal English language press, religious freedom is becoming harder to defend as journalists increasingly fear attack if they defend Ahmadis.

The report says the government has done little to alleviate the problems faced by Ahmadis: it would be 'political suicide' to deal with the Ahmadi problem directly and politicians will not use the example of the Ahmadis to make the case for religious tolerance. The nameless government spokesman quoted earlier told the Group that it is now beyond the power of government to reverse the situation for Ahmadis. The result is that there is no party or institution prepared to lead the debate on Ahmadis in Pakistan and, therefore, a change in public attitude is not anticipated in the near future. Nothing is more indicative of the government's double-facedness than that it first demanded and received Rs. 1.5 crore from the Ahmadiyya community for the return of its nationalised institutions and then neither returned them to their true owners nor refunded the money.

So much for President Musharraf's "enlightened moderation" then.

NIKAH FORMS AND RELATED MATTERS

Please comply with the following instructions, which take effect immediately:

1. **Number of Nikah Forms**: A set of Four (4) Nikah Forms is to be completed. All of the forms are to be completed as "Originals". Each concerned person needs to put his/her signatures on all the FOUR Forms separately. DO NOT make "copies" of one original form. All forms are required to be signed as originals.

2. **Sections:** A Nikah Form has 10 sections. All relevant sections must be completed by the concerned parties.

   - **Section I:** To be completed by the "Guardian" (***Wali***) of the bride.
   - **Section II:** To be completed when the Guardian (***Wali***) cannot personally attend the Nikah ceremony. On *Wali's* signature, two witnesses are required.
   - **Section III:** To be completed by the "Bride" along with witnesses to her signature.
   - **Section IV**: To be completed by the President of the Jama'at where the "Bride" resides.
   - **Section V:** To be completed by the "Bridegroom" along with two witnesses to his signature.
   - **Section VI:** To be completed by the President of the Jama'at where the "Bridegroom" resides.
   - **Section VII**: To be completed if the "Bridegroom" cannot attend the Nikah ceremony. Witnesses are required to his signature.
   - **Section VIII**: Not applicable. This section is for the Central/National Marriage Department.
   - **Section IX:** To be completed at the time of the Nikah ceremony by the person who conducts the Nikah.
   - **Section X:** This section is for the two witnesses of the Nikah ceremony.

IMPORTANT: In the USA, only the Regional Missionaries are authorized to conduct a Nikah. Where it is not possible for a Missionary to conduct a Nikah, with the prior permission of Ameer Sahib, the local Jama'at President or some other person may conduct a Nikah. No one can take upon himself to conduct a Nikah without obtaining prior permission of Ameer Sahib.

3. **Marriage Registration:** Prior to any Nikah ceremony, the bride and the bridegroom are required to register their marriage in the local county office/civil court/ marriage bureau, etc. No Nikah will be conducted without the legal proof of the marriage bureau, etc. No Nikah will be conducted without the legal proof of the marriage having been registered with the relevant government office.

4. **Divorce Papers:** In case of a second marriage of the bride and/or the bridegroom, it is required that a copy of the documents pertaining to the dissolution of the first marriage be provided to the person conducting the Nikah. Copy of *Talaq* or *Khula* papers must be attached with the Nikah Forms.

5. **Parties Living in Different Countries:** In the case of the bride or the bridegroom residing in two different countries, in addition to the verifications by the local Jama'at Presidents, **sections IV and VI are to be verified by both of the Ameers of the respective countries.** The Nikah Forms must be completely filled before they are submitted to Ameer Sahib for his signature. If the bride or the bride groom is in another country, her/his name, father's name, address and the amount of proposed Dower money must be filled in before sending the forms for Ameer Sahib's signature. An incomplete Nikah Form shall not be processed at the Headquarters.

6. **To obtain signature of the Ameer:** All the four FORMS must be mailed to Ameer Sahib at 15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905. The Nikah Forms must reach to Ameer Sahib a few days before the party concerned plans to send/take the Forms to the other country. Reasonable time must be given at the Headquarters for obtaining Ameer Sahib's signature and for the Forms to get back via mail.

7. **Registration in the Jama'at:** The Missionary (or the authorized person) after conducting the Nikah should send all the FOUR Forms to the Ameer, USA for proper registration in the Jama'at. The Missionary (or the authorized person) should keep a photocopy of the completed Nikah Form for the local Jama'at record. After registration of the Nikah at the National Headquarters, the Bridegroom and the Guardian of the Bride (*Wali*) shall receive one original Form each.

8. **Premarital Marriage Counseling:** In the USA, a system of Marriage Counseling has been set up by Ameer Sahib. Concerned parties should be encouraged, wherever possible, to take advantage of this service.

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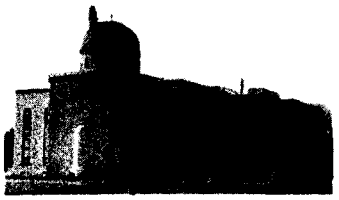

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Resolution

Resolution passed unanimously by Majlise Aamla Jama'at Ahmadiyya USA in its meeting held on February 3, 2007.

Members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA heard with great pain and sorrow the sad demise of Brother Muhaimin Karim of Chicago, which happened suddenly when he was shot in a senseless way outside his shop while helping one of his employee on December 23, 2006. This tragic incident tore apart the families on two continents on opposite ends of the Atlantic Ocean.

Muhaimin Karim was a son of Br. Abdul Karim, President Chicago East Jama'at and son-in-law of Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam, Amir & Missionary In charge Ghana. He held many Jama'at positions in Chicago Jama'at and he also served Majlise Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya USA as its National Vice President.

Br. Muhamin Karim was an exemplary Khadim, exemplary Ahmadi, an exemplary husband, and a wholesome member of our community in every way. We not only share his family's grief but we miss him.

We send our condolences to his father, wife, and father in law. May Almighty Allah grant him an elevated place in Jannatul Firdous; and may He provide comfort and steadfastness to the bereaved family.

Copies of this resolution to be sent to Br. Muhamin Karim's father, Br. Abdul Karim, President Chicago East jamat; his wife, Amtul Shukoor Wahab; and his father-in-law Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam, Amir & Missionary In charge Ghana; and Editor *Ahmadiyya Gazette/AlNoor.*

Ahsanullah Zafar
Amir
Jama'at Ahmadiyya, USA

A Thank You Note to the *Jama'at* from the Karim Family

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rehmatullahi Wa Barakatahu,

I, Abdul Karim, my wife, Rafia, Muhaimin's wife Amatush and my children and grandchildren, Abdun Noor, Abdul Qahar, Amatus Sami, Nailah, Amatul Haleem Cassidy and Khari want to express our gratitude to the *Jama'at* members for their love, sympathy, prayers and the help that they all extended to us after the untimely death of our son, Muhaimin Karim.

We would like to extend our thanks to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih Khamis[aba] , Mirza Masroor Ahmad for leading Muhaimin's *Janaaza* prayer in London, for his kind words of condolence, and for allowing Abdul Wahab, the *Ameer* of Ghana (Muhaimin's father-in-law) to come to Chicago to attend his *Janaaza*. We are most grateful to Ameer Wahab for leading or son's *Janaaza* prayer. We would also like to express our gratitude to the *Ameer* of USA, Ahsanullah Zafar Sahib, for sending the *Naib Ameer* of USA, Bajwah Sahib and the National General Secretary, Masood Ahmad Malik Sahib, to represent him at the funeral. Also *Jazakamullah* to the *Ameer* of Canada for his message of condolence. Our heart-felt thanks to the *Sadr* of Khudamul Ahmadiyya and his representatives who came for the funeral, and Khudam's National *Amila* for sending a proclamation of their love and appreciation for Muhaimin's services to their *Tanzeem.*

We pray to Allah to bless the brothers and sisters of the Jama'at who cooked & cleaned for us, wrote letters, sent cards or called us. We pray to Allah that may He shower His most choice blessings on all these brothers and sisters. Ameen.

Wassalaam,

Abdul and Rafia Karim

ISLAM, THE LIVING RELIGION

Islam is not only the complete and perfect religion, it is also an ever-living religion. This is why there are prophecies about the coming of reformers from time to time for the revival of Islam. The Holy Prophet[saw] says:

"That most surely God Almighty would raise at the head of every century a reformer from this Community, who would revive the faith of Islam."

(Abu Daud, Kitabul Malahim)

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L-8 THE RECORD THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2007

The Record

YOUR VIEWS

Misunderstanding Muslim garb

There has been great hue and cry about the outer garment (burqa) and head covering (hijab) of the Muslim women in some European countries. Have these nations forgotten teachings of their own religious books and traditions of their women folk?

Outer garments and head coverings are signs of piety and modesty. Has anyone seen a portrait of Hadhrat Maryam, a revered woman of Islam, without head covering, or, at one time, a nun without one?

There is a lot of misconception in the West about burqas or hijabs. Any woman who is wearing them is considered oppressed and backward. This is not the case at all. You can find educated Muslim women wearing burqas – as doctors, scientists, engineers, teachers and poets – all living good lives.

The injunction of purda (veil) is found in the Quran. Muslim women are directed to cover themselves while going out so they are recognized and are not molested. The purda protects women in the same way that boxes and cabinets protect crystal. In one of the traditions of the Holy Prophet, he refers to women as crystals.

Amatul Latif Zirvi
Fair Lawn, Jan. 25

PAGE B9

HERALDNEWS

Wednesday,
January 24, 2007

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

War, violence and media perception

I had the opportunity to watch the CNN program "The War Within," by Christina Amanpour, which was based on discussion with some Muslims in London. I was surprised that she did not even mention the name of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. It is a tragedy that those who advocate violence are mentioned more in the news media than those who are striving for peace.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a peaceful community. Its motto is "love for all, hatred for none." Our Caliph Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahman who resides in London, gives sermons and addresses on different occasions to establish peace, to strive for morality and to be spiritual, which is the essence of the true teachings of Islam.

There is a tendency in the Western media to ignore the true teachings of Islam. It is the duty of journalists to be unbiased in reporting so that the public can know the truth. The Muslims did not invent bombs and atomic bombs. They were invented by the West.

The suicide bombers use their own bodies to deliver these bombs while the West uses more sophisticated means to deliver these bombs. Both cause destruction and loss of human lives and both are wrong.

Amatul Katif Zirvi, Fair Lawn

FAZLE OMAR HOSPITAL
RABWAH
Ph: 047-6211373, 6213970
6213909
Fax: 6212659
URL: www.foh-rabwah.org

Dear

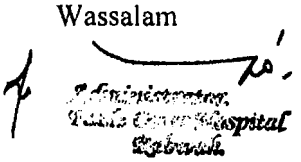
Asslam-o-Alikum Warehmatullah.

As a doctor working in the United States of America, allow me to address you on behalf of the Tahir Heart Insitute, Fazl-e-Umar Hospital, Rabwah, Pakistan. According to plan, this institute will be operational (insha'Allah) early next year. The US Jamaa't having been an integral part of the Tahir Heart Institute, you are surely aware that a project of this magnitude has so far no parallel in the history of the Ahamdiyya Jamaa't. Moreover, it presents a multitude of rare opportunities for all Ahmadi doctors to step forward and offer their unequalled dedicated expertise in their chosen field. May Allah reward you with His countless blessings for doing so.

If you choose to apply for a post regarding your particular field of expertise, please inform us of the area in which you wish to do so. For all future contact and information, please use the after mentioned contact details.

Jazakumullah

Wassalam



Contact:

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WAQFE ARZI SCHEME

Spiritual Correction and Advice is the Responsibility of Every Ahmadi

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih III[rh] States:

"There is a great need for a Waqfe Arzi (*Short term or temporary devotion*). The fact is that a section of the Jama'at has forgotten that the members of the Jama'at are also the Murabbis or Missionaries, themselves, and the little increase in the number of Missionaries is not sufficient. The Jama'at conceives that the responsibility for guidance and advice rests with the missionaries. In fact, every Ahmadi must discharge the duty of guidance and correction diligently. I have introduced the scheme of Waqfe Arzi for the purpose of drawing the attention of the Jama'at towards this duty, and to develop a desire for Islah-o-Irshad. In this are both spiritual as well as physical benefits."

(Report of Majlise Mushawarat, Al-Fazl: November 3, 1966)

Every Ahmadi Should Join the Waqfe Arzi Scheme

"The Missionaries, the office-bearers, in fact every Ahmadi should join the Waqfe Arzi Scheme and should encourage his brother to do so, as well. Undoubtedly, this is a path of sacrifice. In fact it is a very narrow path. Also, it is also a fact that we cannot seek the pleasure of Allah without walking on the path of sacrifice."

(Al-Fazl: August 27, 1969)

A Source of Self-correction

"The second major benefit of the Waqfe Arzi Scheme is that those who wish to join this scheme will have to examine their own souls in certain aspects. Before they embark on this scheme, their attention is directed towards their own weaknesses. Thus, they are immediately inclined towards prayers. This implies that one of the important preparations for those joining this scheme is their devotion for prayers. They should start increasing their religious knowledge. And they should take some books along when they start off for the scheme. They should think and ponder over their weaknesses. They should have a desire that when they go to a new place they should set a good example and should not be source of defect. That is why the Waqfe Arzi groups have benefited from the blessings of prayers.

(Al-Fazl: February 12, 1977)

All those, who are interested in serving the cause of Islam and Ahmadiyyat under the banner of the blessed scheme of Waqfe Arzi, should contact: **Dr. Zaheeruddin Mansoor Ahmad, National Secretary Talimul Qur'an and Waqf-e-Arzi: 162 Penwick Cr.,Frederick, MD 21072**

Tel: (301) 560-2532

Wasiyyat

English translation of a poem
by
Maulana Ataul Mujeeb Rashed,
Imam of the London Mosque

Wasiyyat is a heavenly scheme
A means to gain entry to Paradise
Respond to this call, O my friends
Our revered Imam is making this call
Make a Will, do make a Will
Urge every one to do the same

It is a way to gain proximity to God
A source of His Forgiveness and Grace
It makes one's good deeds shine
The light of God illumines the hearts
Make a Will, do make a Will
Urge every one to do the same

The Messiah of our times received a glad tiding
Through revelation he was given this Sign
How great is this Mercy and Grace of God
We have been given a key to His Paradise
Make a Will, do make a Will
Urge every one to do the same

Be not unnerved by its conditions
God shall dispel all worries and grief
We shall bathe eternally in Blessings
Day and night shall rain God's Grace
Make a Will, do make a Will
Urge every one to do the same

(Translation by Mr. Khalil Mullick)

MTA USA

Volunteers needed

MTA International was started in 1992 from London. It now provides transmission around the world and around the clock. This means that a lot of programming needs be prepared and presented. As we all know that all MTA programming is made by the volunteers of jamaat Ahmadiyya all over the world. USA jamaat has been lagging behind in this category of sacrifice. MTA USA is now preparing to live up to this responsibility. Volunteers are needed to make programs for the MTA. Programs in the following categories are needed:

1) All programs must be in English language.
2) Subject of the program should be
    a) See America: Visits to various places of interests such as parks, museums, monuments, cities etc.
    b) Children's programs
    c) Health and medical sciences
    d) Other disciplines such as home improvement, building, sports etc
    e) Programs based on local jamaat functions and events are not accepted
    f) All programs should be in documentary format.

We realize that most people would not be familiar with the process of film making. Therefore training will be provided to willing participants.
The most important need is for volunteers to go out and video tape the material. All jamaat members are invited to participate, young and old, men and women.

If you are interested please call the 24 hour help line: (615) 390 6775
Suggestions are welcome but workers are really appreciated.

Lutf ur Rehman. (Incharge programming USA)